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THE NEO-CLASSIC MOVEMENT IN SPAIN DURING THE XVIII CENTURY

BY

ROBERT E. PELLISSIER

STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA
PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY
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PRESS

FOREWORD.

Among the magnanimous young Frenchmen who, at the first news of their country's peril, hastened to her aid, was Robert Edouard Pellissier. Although all his mature years had been spent in America, and although he held an honorable and secure position on the far Pacific coast, he unhesitatingly made the great sacrifice, and, after two years of service, met a soldier's death on the Somme. The ship that bore him across the ocean carried five hundred compatriots of humble station, waiters and cooks who had made their home in New York. His first winter was passed in the Vosges, where, in the intense cold, hundreds of his companions were disabled by frozen feet. The military casualties, too, were severe. In that season his battalion lost twice as many men as it had originally contained. Being finally wounded himself, he was allowed, on leaving the hospital, to follow a course of instruction that prepared him to become an officer. It was just after the completion of those studies that I saw him, in Paris, for the last time, in January, 1916. Radiant with health and cheerful courage, far stronger than I had ever seen him before, he was quite satisfied with the new mode of life which at first had seemed so strange. The trenches, he declared, were very comfortable, the food was excellent, and every care was taken of the men.

I had known Pellissier for many years. Primarily bent on the physician's career, he entered the Harvard Scientific School, where he graduated in 1904. Persistent ill health, however, obliged him to relinquish his first intent, and he turned to literary and philological study. Other members of his family had devoted themselves to letters: he was a cousin of Georges Pellissier, the eminent critic, and a brother of Professor Adeline Pellissier of Smith College. The years 1908-09 and 1910-11 were spent in our Graduate School, and he received the Doctor's degree here in 1913. Meanwhile he had achieved success as a teacher. Harvard had for a while the benefit of his collaboration, but most of his work was done at Stanford University, where he soon obtained a congenial post which enabled him to combine study and instruction. At the time of his departure he had reached the grade of Assistant Professor. Quiet, modest, serious, thoughtful, conscientious, gifted with rare pedagogical skill, he won the respect of all he met and the affection of all who knew him. The present volume, composed during his busy years of teaching at Stanford, shows the systematic thoroughness, the clearness and breadth of view that marked his scholarship. May it help to keep

green the memory of one who gladly surrendered to a righteous cause a life full of promise and already rich in service!

C. H. GRANDGENT

Cambridge, Mass.
March, 1917

ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor J. D. M. Ford of Harvard University, to Professor A. L. Guérard and to Professor C. G. Allen, both of the Leland Stanford Junior University, who had the kindness to read portions of this study before it was typewritten. Thanks to the advice given me by these gentlemen, the errors in the language and in the subject matter of this volume were made less numerous.

The subject of this study was suggested to me by Professor Irving Babbitt's course on literary criticism since the Renaissance and by Professor Ford's lectures on the history of Spanish literature.

ROBERT E. PELLISSIER

Stanford University, California
January 26, 1913

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

PAGE

FOREWORD 3

ACKNOWLEDGMENT 5

CONTENTS 7

INTRODUCTION 9

CHAPTER I. The Dawn of the Rationalistic Spirit 13

CHAPTER II. The Reintroduction of the Aristotelian Rules of Criticism in Spain Through Luzán's Poética 23

CHAPTER III. El Diario de los Literatos: A purely Spanish manifestation of the new spirit in literary criticism 49

CHAPTER IV. An Organized Group of Neo-Classicists. The Academy "Del Buen Gusto." 61

CHAPTER V. The Spread of the Neo-Classic Doctrines Among the Middle Class 95

CHAPTER VI. Leandro Fernández de Moratín. His contribution to the Neo-Classic movement. His struggle with the illiterate classes 117

CHAPTER VII. Acute Stages in the Neo-Classic Controversy at Home and Abroad 133

CHAPTER VIII. The Last Stages of the Neo-Classic Movement. Jovellanos and Samaniego 155

CONCLUSION 173

BIBLIOGRAPHY 185

INTRODUCTION.

Neo-classicism never obtained so firm a grip on Spanish thought as it did on that of France or Italy. We must not conclude from this that Aristotelian theorists in Spain were less capable men than their brothers in the neighboring countries. Quite to the contrary, the scholars who expounded "the Rules" in Spain gave clear proofs of possessing great critical independence. As a matter of fact it was because of their intellectual superiority, that neo-classicism met with such scant success in the peninsula. The Spanish exponents of Aristotle were unwilling to shut their eyes to the defects of the system and never supported it more than half-heartedly. Their attitude was on the whole more dignified and more intelligent than that of the critics belonging to either the Italian or the French school.

This independence of judgment appeared in the very first document of the movement, which is Torres Naharro's prologue to the "Propaladia." It was written in 1517 and published in 1547. It was composed therefore a few years only after the publication of the Greek text of Aristotle's Poetics by the Aldine press and it was given to the public before Robortello's commentary.

The prologue to the "Propaladia," while it is not an extensive treatment of neo-classicism, contains all of its commonplaces. It defines tragedy and comedy, it calls for five acts in all dramatic productions and it insists on verisimilitude in all its applications.

The author, after outlining the rules, shows that he has no fanatical desire to impose them on any one, for he ends by stating that intelligent writers who differ from his opinions always have the right "to take away or to add."

Juan de la Cueva, an admirer of Horace, is also a great name in the history of neo-classicism in Spain, but his attitude towards the movement was on the whole that of an antagonist. He is more revolutionary by far than Naharro. He does object to the mingling of the tragic and the comic and he warns writers against the use of quibbles. Yet he feels that the rules were evolved from conditions which existed in the past and which have but little connection with those of the present. He would do away for instance with the unity of place. His aim in writing on the subject of dramatic criticism is to indicate the rules which, from his observation, seem to govern the composition of the Comedia.

The great expounders of neo-classicism in Spain, the men who cor-

respond to Castelvetro, Minturno and Robortello in Italy, are Pinciano, Cascales, and Gonzáles de Salas.

The great critical work of the first of these, "La Philosophia Antigua," is such a liberal interpretation of Aristotle's Poetics that Menéndez y Pelayo says of it that, even in our own days, it can be read not only with profit but with pleasure.

The so-called "Tablas Poéticas" of Cascales are less liberal in their treatment of the neo-classic principles, yet in them the author refuses to admit that poetry can be the vehicle of purely didactic subjects. This opinion is a grave departure from neo-classic orthodoxy.

As for the work of Gonzáles de Salas entitled "Nueva Idea de la Tragedia" the following lines quoted by Menéndez y Pelayo show how far that author was from slavishly following the Italian school of criticism: "Comedias tenemos hoy de los Griegos y de los Latinos . . . que si se presentaran hoy en nuestros theatros . . . de ninguna manera nos deleitaran . . . Qué servirán, pues, aquellos preceptos para la estructura de nuestras fábulas? Mucho sin duda pero no lo que enteramente es necesario."

Through the works which we have enumerated, the rules received probably as much publicity in Spain as they had in either France or Italy. The conditions which they encountered in Spain were radically different from those existing in the other two Latin countries.

Instead of being dogmatically imposed on dramatic authors who were groping their way to success, they were introduced with marked half-heartedness in a country where an entirely different dramatic system had proved amply its ability to satisfy the needs of the nation.

There could be but one result. Many writers paid no attention to the "Rules." Authors gifted with a philosophical turn of mind were interested in them from a purely academic standpoint. They admitted what often seemed their faultless logic. They did not attempt to apply them since it was clear that their spirit was in direct opposition to the esthetic tendencies of the modern period.

It was this struggle between the intellect and the esthetic intuition which made possible such a poem as Lope's "Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias" and which brought out from the pen of Cervantes so many statements indicating deep respect for the rules of Aristotle.

In several instances each one of these authors admitted that his actual performance was in contradiction with what seemed to be the dictates of reason.

Lope finally solved the difficulty by exclaiming, perhaps a little callously, that a poet's first duty was to please the public irrespective of the

quality of the latter's taste. Cervantes did not solve his problem with as much ease. He seems to have remained for a long time in a state of self-contradiction. Though he wrote no regular plays at any time during his career, he certainly at first favored the rules. Later, without actually condemning them, he strove to compete with Lope in the field of the irregular drama.

Other writers like Barreda and Tirso de Molina met the situation in a much more able way. They anticipated the arguments of the Romantic School, opposing valid and well thought out reasons to the neo-classic dogma.

The result of hesitancy and contradiction, on the one hand, added to able argumentation on the other, was the complete victory of the party of artistic freedom over that of neo-classicism.

It is not for us to repeat here how in course of time artistic freedom degenerated into artistic lawlessness which finally lapsed into exhaustion and sterility.

In France, after the great artistic impulse of the seventeenth century had spent itself, rationalism, of which neo-classicism is merely a form, lent a new vigor to the productions of literary men.

In Spain, thought seems to have died with art and, as a result, at the end of the seventeenth century, Spanish letters reached a point of unprecedented debasement.

Early in the eighteenth century, patriotic Spaniards who deplored the state of intellectual stagnation, evidences of which were patent all about them, resolved to start a fight against such a state of affairs.

Outside of Spain, rationalism was everywhere quickening European thought. These self-appointed leaders of a Spanish intellectual awakening determined upon introducing into Spain the methods of thought which were making the neighboring countries great.

Neo-classicism with its many simple and even obvious arguments was a tempting form of rationalism to men living in a period as unartistic as it was irrational. This is why, first by individual endeavor and later through the concerted efforts of little groups, this intellectual élite proceeded to reintroduce neo-classicism into Spain.

The method of this reintroduction, the ensuing spread of the rules of Aristotle, their influence on Spanish literature and their ultimate influence on Spanish thought are the points which form the subject matter of this study.

CHAPTER I.

The Dawn of the Rationalistic Spirit

To study the rise of neo-classic theories and of the neo-classic stage in Spain, one is naturally led to look to the life at the court of Philip V for the first signs of a movement which was to influence deeply the whole field of Spanish literature. That the court of the grandson of Louis XIV should have had an immediate and wide-reaching influence in literary matters, as it did in governmental and administrative affairs, seems a reasonable expectation.

The Court of Philip V.—As a matter of fact, the gloom of the first years of the reign, the morose character of the King and the open hostility of Spanish courtiers to any innovation which might interfere with the old Spanish traditions made the influence of the court practically negligible as a factor in the history of neo-classicism in Spain.[1]

The King's only passion was the chase[2] and the courtiers wanted nothing so much as a continuation of the mournful life which had been the lot of Spanish courts under the Austrian rule. The memoirs of the time show how few were the forms of amusement at the court of Philip V and how seldom these amusements took a literary form.

Dangers of all kinds assailed the new monarchy from the very start; for a decade from the time of its installation it never was established safely enough to be able to think about the lighter side of life.

Philip V on his arrival at Madrid instituted various reforms which did away with some of the few forms of diversions inherited from Charles II. The Mémoires of Noailles tell us that, with the Spanish cooks, the King dismissed the court dwarfs who are styled by the author "une vermine de la cour dont le roi était toujours accompagné, selon l'étiquette." These dwarfs who were intended to act as court fools had become so impudent that one of them dared to make fun of Philip who had taken off his hat to a duchess, remarking that the ruler of Spain was not to bare his head for any one. . . .[3] This occurred in 1701; the year before the King had refused to be present at an auto da fe prepared especially for his coronation.[4]

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[1] Trémoilles. Princess des Ursins à Torcy, Jan. 6, 1702.

[2] Noailles, v. I, p. 328, and Hippeau, v. I, p. clxxxi; letter from Louis XIV to Marsin. Tessé, Mémoires, v. II, p. 155.

[3] Noailles, v. I, pp. 328 and 352.

[4] Noailles, v. I, p. 332.

The attitude of Philip in these matters did not please the Spanish courtiers and we are not surprised to find that, in return, they looked askance at the balls which the Princess des Ursins tried to introduce at court for the amusement of the young queen. Marie Louise of Savoy was of a light and playful disposition. She had been brought up at the court of Piedmont, that is among purely French influences, and she would certainly have played an important part socially in a court offering any opportunities of the kind. The Marshal de Tessé says of her: "L'esprit de la Reine et peut-être son coeur seraient naturellement portés au plaisir et à faire vivre sa cour avec la communication que les femmes ont en France avec le monde et comme cette princesse l'a vu en Piémont." [5] Because of the hostility of the grandees and of the indifference of the King to social matters and also because she entered most heartily into all the problems which her husband had to face, the little queen completely sacrificed her pleasure-loving nature to her duties. While the King was in Italy commanding his armies, it was Marie Louise, then only eighteen years old, who carried on the affairs of the state. She would spend six hours a day with the Council transacting business, she offered public audiences and her time was so completely taken up with the affairs of the realm that, to use her own words, she "scarcely had time to play at blindman's buff in the evenings with her ladies." [6] * Mme. des Ursins writing to Torcy says: "Il n'y a guère de jour que la reine ne passe dans ses conseils cinq ou six heures, le reste se passe tout à des audiences ennuyeuses et à visiter des églises ou des couvents: en un mot je n'ai jamais vu une vie qui convienne si peu à une jeune princesse gaie naturellement." [7]

This gloomy life continued after the return of the King from Italy, for, in the words of Tessé, the King was as opposed to social life as the Spanish courtiers themselves; he was even less communicative than they. If the "étiquette" had not already existed, he would have organized it himself.[8]

After the victory of Villaviciosa a noticeable change came over the court and the courtiers. The French, who had been regarded more or less as interlopers, had really fought for Spain; Vendôme had given the Spaniards an opportunity to show their devotion to their country, success had crowned the united efforts of the soldiers of the two nations and much of the mutual suspicion which had existed until then died out in 1710.

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[5] Tessé, v. II, p. 155.

[6] Letter of Marie Louise of Savoy to Louis XIV, July 27, 1702. Collection de lettres de la Princesse des Ursins, par Louis de la Trémoille, v. II.

[7] Same, v. II, P. des U. to Torcy, Sept. 6, 1702.

[8] Tessé, v. II, p. 155.

* The stars refer to notes at the end of the chapters.

For the first time since 1700 the King felt secure on his throne and the Spaniards at court looked with something like friendliness on French manners and customs. Soon after 1711 mentions of festivities and plays at court are of frequent occurrence in the letters and memoirs of the time.[9] The Chevalier du Bourck in a letter to Torcy tells us that in January 1712 comedies were being performed at the royal palace, adding however "il faut avouer que les divertissements de cette cour sont minces et peu proportionnés à l'âge d'un prince né à Versailles et d'une princesse née à Turin, mais Mme. des Ursins se propose d'égayer un peu la cour dans le temps de la paix." [10]

That the "camarera mayor" did not immediately succeed in turning gloom into joy is indicated by another letter of Du Bourck to Torcy dated February 1712. "La cour prend les divertissements que ce pays fournit pendant le carnaval, ces divertissements consistent à passer trois ou quatre heures à entendre une comédie espagnole très ennuyeuse et representée par des acteurs et actrices de triste figure." [11] Fortunately the French ambassador to the Spanish court was a man full of resources and, in that same letter by Du Bourck, we find that Monsieur de Bonnac and other distinguished persons were rehearsing a play of Corneille, that a first performance had given great satisfaction.[12]

Such innovations could not be pleasing to Spaniards, but their attitude had changed and what would once have caused an outburst of indignation merely produced discontent among some and was cordially received by a few. Already in 1713 the Marquis de Villena was openly favoring French performances, and that very year his influence brought about the foundation of the Royal Academy, an institution distinctly French in its character. A letter from Madame des Ursins to Torcy, dated February 1713, gives us an idea of the way the marquis judged the new plays: "Nous avons tous les soirs des comédies espagnoles et françaises: les dernières sont fort joliement representées par des domestiques du roi d'Espagne. Les autres n'ont ni règles ni décence au moins dans la plus part: on y fait parler les femmes aux hommes avec une liberté qui ne convient à aucune et Monsieur le Marquis de Villena, qui est homme de belles lettres, est de notre sentiment prétendant qu'il n'y a ni rime ni raison et que Calderón et Solís 'no tenían nada que ver' avec Corneille et Racine. Cela ne laisse pas d'amuser deux ou trois heures les soirs." *

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[9] Trémoille, v. IV, P. des U. à Torcy, Feb. 11, 1711.

[10] Trémoille, v. V, p. 3. Du Bourck à Torcy, Jan. 18, 1712.

[11] Trémoille, v. V. Du Bourck à Torcy, Feb. 1, 1712.

[12] Combes, La Princesse des Ursins, ch. xxxvi, quotation from letter by Du Bourck.

From these quotations it is clear that ever since the battle of Villaviciosa the court had tended more and more to become an active social and literary center. Had conditions remained favorable, the court might have won an undisputed title as a Gallicizing force in Spain, and the French influences which had already made such marked progress in matters of administration might have influenced literature at a much earlier date and more deeply than it actually did. As a matter of fact the generous and vivacious queen died in 1714 and Philip V fell again into his morose attitude, giving full sway to his passion for the chase and for solitude. One of the reasons that made him look with particular favor on Elizabeth Farnese as a successor to his late wife was the fact that the Princess of Parma was accustomed to living in a court where diversions were not great. For that reason, Philip felt that she would be eminently adapted to a court "où les reines ont mené une vie plus retirée que toutes les autres." [13]

Elizabeth upon becoming queen did not disappoint the expectations of the king. Seeing that the best way to obtain full control over the monarch was to keep him entirely to herself, she proceeded to turn her husband into a recluse.[14] The Princess des Ursins was sent back to France and with her a good part of the French influences left Madrid, while the king yielded absolutely to what Tessé called "son éternel désir de ne voir personne." * There no longer was any call for plays at the court, Italian music and Farinelli supplied its small needs for entertainments.* The royal palaces fell into the gloomy, brooding condition which St. Simon has described, a condition worthy of the days of the Hapsburg dynasty. If the court had done but little before to spread the French ideas on art and philosophy it now became neutral in its reaction on the intellectual life of Spain or, if it had any reaction at all, it was more Italian than French. This condition lasted from the moment the Princess des Ursins was exiled until the death of Philip in 1746. That the introduction and diffusion of French ideas was not dependent on the government or on the court is clearly shown by the fact that it was far from Madrid that the first distinctly Gallicized work was written and that it was written during that period of courtly inactivity which we have just described.*

Feijóo. The Infiltration of French Ideas.—Feijóo published the first volume of his "Teatro Crítico" in 1726. This work was the result of the thought and the reading of a recluse whose entire life had been spent in

[13] Trémoille, v. V, Philip V to Louis XIV, June 23, 1714.

[14] Syveton quotes St. Simon: Il végétait morne et silencieux sequestré avec la reine.

teaching at the provincial university of Oviedo. Feijóo had never traveled extensively, it was only late in life that he visited Madrid, and yet his essays show a turn of mind and a fund of ideas derived clearly from French influences. It had not been possible for the semi-French court to make the capital a distributing center of French ideas but individual Spaniards even in distant provinces were, through reading, acquiring a stock of ideas and opinions of a rationalistic nature; there was a steady influx of thought coming into Spain from beyond the Pyrenees and the court neither hindered nor promoted that movement to any great extent.

The first volume of the "Teatro Crítico" has an essay entitled "A Parallel of the French and the Spanish Languages." This essay sheds the most vivid light on the attitude of the middle class of at least northern Spain towards the infiltration of foreign ideas. It shows that the struggle between gallophiles and conservative Spaniards was already well started in 1726, for its first words are a censure pronounced against the excesses of both parties. The following long quotation proves that the foreign ideas had seized upon many and influenced not only their intellectual attitude but had also affected their habits of dress and speech. Even at that early date their attachment to French ways was worthy of notice. This leads us to believe that the movement must have been fairly noticeable even in the earlier years of the first quarter of the century. "Dos extremos entrambos reprehensibles noto en nuestros españoles en orden á las cosas nacionales: unos las engrandecen hasta el cielo; otros las abaten hasta el abismo. Aquéllos, que ni con el trato de los extranjeros, ni con la lectura de los libros, espaciaron su espíritu fuera del recinto de su pátria, juzgan que cuanto hay de bueno en el mundo está encerrado en ella. De aquí apuel bárbaro desdén con que miran á las demás naciones . . . bástales ver á otro español con un libro italiano ó francés en la mano, para condenarle por genio extravagante y ridículo." So much for the reactionary party who neither travel nor read, now for those who are giving up the national traditions. "Por el contrario, los que han peregrinado por várias tierras, ó sin salir de la suya, comerciando con extranjeros, si son picados tanto cuanto de la vanidad de espíritus amenos, inclinados á lenguas y noticas, todas las cosas de otras naciones mirian con admiración, las de la nuestra con desdén. Sólo en Francia, pongo por ejemplo, reinan, según su dictámen, la delicadeza, la policía, el buen gusta: acá todo es rudeza y barbarie. Es cosa graciosa ver á algunos de estos nacionistas (que tomo por lo mismo que antinacionales) hacer violencia á todos sus miembros, para imitar á los extranjeros en gestos, movimientos y acciones, poniendo especial studio en andar como ellos andan, sentarse como se sientan, reírse como se ríen, hacer la cortesía como ellos la hacen, y así

de todo lo demás. . . ." [15] Surely the Gallicizing of the people had advanced quite far since such observations as the ones just quoted could be made in a little provincial town, whose population had no particular opportunity to develop a class of "précieux" except in so far as its being a seaport enabled it to communicate quite freely with the rest of Europe. But dress and social graces were not the only signs of the foreign infiltration. The language of the provinces was also being altered, by these same extremists and by others, who were influenced more in their mind than in their habits of dress and attitude. "Entre éstos y aun fuera de éstos sobresalen algunos apasionados amantes de la lengua francesa, que prefiriéndola con grandes ventajas á la castellana ponderan sus hechizos, exaltan sus primores y no pudiendo sufrir ni una breve ausencia de su adorado idioma, con algunas voces que usurpan de él salpican la conversación áun cuando hablan en castellano. Ésto, en parte, puede decirse que ya se hizo moda, pues los que hablan castellano puro, casi son mirados como hombres del tiempo de los godos."

Feijóo's patriotic mind was not to be blinded by these excesses to the advantages which the new movement could bring to Spain. Among these real advantages, he places the opportunity that the French language offered the individuals to read books which, while of primary importance, were not to be obtained in the Castilian tongue.

The books which Feijóo cites are not of a frivolous character and the eccentricities in dress and diction which he condemned in the above quotation could not have arisen from the perusal of such works. It may be fair to infer that the lighter side of French literature was not unknown to the reading public of the city of Oviedo. As a matter of fact we shall see a little later that Feijóo was acquainted with some of the novels of the later school of preciosity. However this may be, what our Benedictine recommends mainly are works of history and science. He cites first of all the great Historical Dictionary of Moréri. Then come the geographical dictionary of Baudrard and Th. Corneille, the publications of the Académie des Sciences, the Journal de Trévoux, the Journal des Savants, La République des Lettres, accounts of Travels by Tavernier and Tévenot. Nearly all are works which treat subjects in the way in which he himself liked to write, that is in a style halfway between that of the essay and that of the newspaper article. To this list may be added references to authors on sacred subjects, Bossuet, Malbranche, and Fénelon whose Télémaque is so honored by Feijóo as to be put in the same class with the works of Mlle. de Scudéry, in which he felt that art had been "most

[15] Feijóo. Teatro Crítico, v. I, essay 15, Paralelo de las lenguas castellana y francesa.

agreeably united with Nature." * This unfortunate judgment suggests the attitude of mind of the neo-classic critic. Indeed it is clear from several discussions on similar subjects that Feijóo was acquainted with the tenets of neo-classic criticism although he does not quote from the great writers of either the Italian or the French school. The critic to whom he refers at times with evident approval is St. Evremond.

In more than one instance does Feijóo show his interest in matters dealing with the judgment of literary works. We have seen him reproach his fellow citizens for speaking a Gallicized Spanish. This is interesting enough since he himself is held up in our days as a writer who sinned in that very way. At the end of the article from which we have been quoting, there is a paragraph roundly condemning the excesses of Gongorism, a form of literary vice arising "from the inability on the author's part to distinguish between elevated style and affectation."

The two essays which bring out Feijóo's ideas on criticism are the one entitled "El no sé qué" and the one discussing the question whether or no taste can be controlled by reason.[16]

As the title of the first one indicates, it discusses that intangible something which is the charm of those literary works which are pleasing and often fascinating in spite of the fact that they do not comply with the orthodox rules which should govern the composition of works of art. Feijóo does not doubt for a moment that there are fixed artistic standards; at the same time he is ready to admit as very real, the value of that uncertain quantity, the "no sé qué."

This is rather paradoxical since very often that "no sé qué" is a flagrant infraction of the body of recognized rules and a menace to the orthodox standards of literary beauty. Feijóo, who possesses great skill in explaining away dilemmas, concludes that the rules known to man are but the merest sketch of the code which would represent perfect art, and that the "no sé qué" is a manifestation of those principles which the mind of man, in its weakness, has not yet tabulated. Were all the rules known, beauty would have no elusive qualities and nothing beautiful could ever come in conflict with the rules. Critics who claim that literary compositions may be beautiful against the rules are quite wrong—"este no sé qué digo yo que es una determinada proporción de las partes en que ellos no habían pensado y distinta de aquella que tienen por único." In other words Feijóo feels that definite standards are absolutely necessary; his priestly temperament feels the need of authority in these matters as in those dealing with religion. At the same time his sound judgment tells him that there is a danger in set rules, he realizes that they may be applied

[16] Feijóo, Teatro Crítico, v. VI, essays 11 and 12.

so strictly as to kill all inspiration. The conflict between his character and his intelligence gave rise to the explanation given above, by means of which the rules keep their place of importance without fettering the legitimate impulses of the artist.

If in the article just discussed Feijóo seems to favor the less explainable sides of beauty, in the one entitled "La Razon del Gusto" he evens up matters by making a stand against those who claim that taste is a lawless something not answerable to reason. Pursuing the policy of compromise already mentioned, he admits first that there are certain elements in taste which are not directly under control. Such are the elements which depend on temperament. But taste is the result of temperament plus intellect, and intellect is always amenable to reason, so that through it the first component of taste can be influenced and directed. Feijóo admits the partial relativity of the idea of taste but only its partial relativity. There is room for uncertainty, but since that element exists together with the intellect the uncertainty can be reduced to a minimum, by training. "Los vicios de la aprensión son curables con razones" and by "aprensión" he means the understanding or the intellect. "De todo lo alegado en este discurso se concluye que hay razón para el gusto y que cabe razon ó disputa contra el gusto." Those writers who claim that taste is above rules, that it is its own excuse for being, will not agree with Feijóo's conclusions. He has the typical distrust of the man of sound moral character for things which are claimed to transcend reason.

At the same time he recognizes that reason has its limitations. Later in life, after witnessing a large part of the neo-classic controversy and the excesses of its defenders, he is less willing to grant so much to reason or rather to logic, for it is the "esprit de géometrie" which he attacks in a letter to a person who had asked to be enlightened as to the true nature of criticism. In that essay he wrote that there were no set rules but merely a body of general maxims which the understanding of any man could formulate—"lo cierto es, que las prendas intelectuales, sean las que fueren, nunca harán un buen crítico, si faltan otras dos que partenecen á la voluntad . . . sinceridad y magnanimidad." [17]

That sincerity and generosity are qualities needed by a great critic is undeniable. Doubtless in mentioning these rather vague qualities Feijóo felt that he was supplying something which it was not in him to understand very well; he was trying to explain away the "no sé qué" for the second time and that "no sé qué" whose existence he felt but whose nature he could not grasp was what we should call the aesthetic sense, the one quality which he did not have to any great degree and the

[17] Cartas Eruditas. Article entitled De la Crítica. B. A. E., v. LVI, p. 598.

absence of which prevented his being a superior critic. He had intellect in plenty, character in abundance, but the third quality, a sure sense of the beautiful, he did not possess.*

Had the aesthetic sense of Feijóo been delicate enough to compare with the keenness of his intelligence and the soundness of his moral character he would have come very near to being the ideal critic whose standards, because of their combined firmness and comprehensiveness, have been compared to a coat of elastic steel.

The critical ideas of Feijóo being lost in a mass of irrelevant matter could never be seriously influential in the literary struggles of the day, even though the works of that writer were immensely popular in Spain. Important as is his place in the neo-classic movement, Feijóo must be counted, not as a founder, but as a precursor. The man who gave Spain the literary platform which was to guide the efforts of a definitely constituted neo-classic movement was Ignacio de Luzán.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I.

P. 14. Marie Louise Gabrielle de Savoie born in Turin in 1688. When Philip V went to Italy to command his armies he made her regent of the realm. That was in 1706. By her energy she stimulated the patriotism of the provinces. She pawned her diamonds to pay her soldiers.

P. 15. Trémoille, v. V. Princesse des Ursins à Torcy, Feb. 20, 1713.

In Sempere and Guarinos. Ensayo de una Biblioteca Española de los Mejores Escritores del reinado de Carlos III., Madrid, 1785, v. I, p. 11. Villena is spoken of as a gentleman fond of chemistry, anatomy, Greek, and botany. "En Escalona, pueblo de sus estados, hay una torre que llaman de la Chímica . . . se conservan en ella todavía muchas hornillas." He seems to represent the beginning of the scientific and "philosophique" spirit in Spain.

P. 16. Le tête à tête perpetuel avait toujours été son goût dominant. Tessé se plaint de "son éternel désir de ne voir personne." Tessé à Noailles, Oct. 24th, 1724. Cited by S. Syveton. Une cour et un aventurier au XVIII s.

P. 16. Farinelli was an Italian tenor who had sung in England and France. His services were definitely retained by Philip V. He was the favorite singer at court under him and his two successors. He seems to have established a record for probity in not using his favored position to better his condition. Bourgoing, (Nouv. Voy.) v. I, p. 230, says of him: "Farinelli . . . qui dut à ses talents une faveur signalée, dont personne ne murmura, parce que personne n'en souffrit, parcequ'il en usa avec modestie et n'en abusa jamais."

P. 16. Menéndez y Pelayo. Ideas Estéticas, v. V, ch. ii.—Desarrollo de la preceptíva durante la primera mitad del siglo XVIII.—concludes that the establishment of the Bourbon dynasty was not the cause of the introduction of rationalism which was a European movement bound to sweep over Spain.

P. 19. In "El Semanario Erudito," vol. V, pp. 97-174, there is printed the following work: Catálogo de algunos libros curiosos y selectos para la librería de algún particular, que desee comprar de tres á quatro mil tomos. Por el Rimo. Padre Maestro Fray Martín Sarmiento. Benedictino de Madrid. There is no indication as to the date when this catalogue was composed, but Sarmiento like Feijóo represents the earlier stages of the rationalistic movement in Spain. The books mentioned here are therefore of interest to us. The classification is as follows:

i. Technical works on theology and general history.

ii. Under "Libros muy curiosos y selectos." Herklot—Bib. Oriental en Francés. Harduin—Todas sus obras por singular. Bergier—Historia de las vías Militares de los Rom. (en Francés.) Moreri—Dict. Chomel—Dict. económico. Basnage—Hist. de los Judíos. Benedictine's History.

iii. "Libros de Singulares Asuntos": Réaumur on Insects, Virtudes del agua común, Del café, thé y chocolate. Juan Tiers Histoire de Perug. (sic). Bonet—Arte de enseñar los mudos (castellanos). San Evremont —Sus obras Francesas. San Aubain—Tratado de la Opinión.

iv. "Delicias." Espectáculo de la Naturaleza en Francés—Ejusden Historia del Cielo. No author given—Buffon's work must be meant by the first title. Polinière—Experimentos phísicos. Abb. Bonière—Origen de las Fábulas. Mr. Rollin—todo. Juan Loke—Humano entendimiento. Gautier—Bib. Fil. en Francés. Ménage. Historia mulierum Philosopharium. P. Regnault—Física. P. Labrausel—Con el abuso de la Crítica. Fontenelle—Sus Opúsculos. Langlet—Méthodo para estudiar la historia. On p. 131 recommends that the complete works of Budé and Bayle be printed.

P. 21. Menéndez y Palayo. Idéas Est., v. V, p. 164, shows how to Feijóo poetry and history were synonymous. Beside his strange enthusiasm for Mlle. de Scudéry we have such remarks as these, after quoting Malherbe, "¿Qué falta nos harían los poetas?" He speaks of "Las patrañas que en verso elegantes presentó Grecia á las naciones." Yet he had said in the Paralelo de Las Lenguas, etc.: "Quién quiere que no aya poetas."

CHAPTER II.

The Reintroduction of the Aristotelian Rules of Criticism in Spain Through Luzán's Poética.

Luzán was a Spanish gentleman * whose formative years had been spent in Italy where he had studied together with the humanities, law, philosophy and mathematics. He had kept in close touch with the literary life of Italy, being made a member of several of the academies of that country. His well rounded education and his long residence abroad had not diminished his love for Spain. Long before returning to his native land he had made a thorough study of Spanish literature. He had become deeply interested in the strong contrast brought out by a comparison of the neo-classic literatures of Europe with Spanish letters. While fully appreciative of the brilliant qualities of Spanish literature, his eclectic training did not allow him to approve of the excessive vigor in style of certain authors or of the tendency to obscurity in thought of others. Moreover he found but little to admire in the works of contemporary writers and he grieved over the intellectual inferiority which these same works betrayed.

Thought and study brought him to the conclusion that this deplorable state of affairs was due directly to the increase in those faults of taste and judgment whose germs he had found even in the writings of some of the recognized masters of Spanish literature.

Luzán felt that if Spanish writers were made to realize how pernicious these defects were, they would be able to mend them. This done, he believed that Spanish literature would begin at once to regain the respectable position which it had held in the past among the great literatures of the world.

His relations with Italian literary academies had naturally turned his attention to that fruitful field of discussions, the Aristotelian rules of criticism. Naturally enough he felt that there was in the rules the remedy needed to combat the disease which had done so much to bring about the decadence of Spanish letters.

Whether he had composed a commentary on Aristotle to be read before some Italian literary Academy and then later had added illustrations drawn from Spanish writers or whether he wrote his commentary with the well formed purpose of applying its tenets to Spanish literature is not known. What is certain is that four years after his return to his country he published a work which was said to be a translation of his Italian

treatise and that it contained beside the customary Aristotelian arguments paragraphs and chapters intended to show in what cases certain important Spanish writers had been guided by reason and in what cases they had strayed from it. This work was the famous "Arte Poética" * which proved to be the literary platform of the neo-classic movement in Spain; the code of laws on which the neo-classic partisans, from 1737 on, were to base their arguments for defense or for attack.

It will pay us, therefore, to make a rather careful analysis of a book which contains the directing lines of the movement which we are studying. We shall lay emphasis only on those points which have a direct bearing on the living issues of the literary controversy in which we are interested, relegating the less relevant matter to foot-notes. In all cases we shall endeavor to grasp the spirit and attitude of mind of the author rather than to attempt any comparison of his statements and arguments with those of the great Italian or French Aristotelian commentators whom he followed. In other words, what interests us is not what Luzán received from others, but what he gave to his Spanish readers.

The Poética. General Character of the Rules.—In the foreword of the "Poética," [18] Luzán warns his readers against the possible error of believing that the principles and rules set forth in the body of the work are in any way new, for on the contrary, they go back, for the greater part, to Aristotle. Horace was the next thinker to discuss them. Since then they have been expounded by the learned men of all cultured nations and their usefulness universally recognized. Even if it were not possible to summon such great names in support of the venerable character of the rules, their authoritativeness could be proved by the fact that it is based on reason itself and therefore is as old as man's power of speech.

After having thus shown the unassailable character of his subject matter he begs his readers not to take umbrage at the criticisms which they will find directed against such writers as Calderón and Solís. They are writers whom he himself respects and admires. If he has criticized them in certain instances, it is not because they seemed to him the most blameworthy, but because they happened to be the ones who thrust themselves most violently on his attention. In this, he acted as do those responsible for the peace and good order of a community, who, when facing a street riot, arrest the first ones they can lay hands on without any consideration of the comparative degree of their guilt.

Luzán's Attitude towards Spanish Literature.—The introductory chapter of Book I of the "Poética" gives more fully Luzán's ideas on the literary situation in Spain. It becomes evident from his statements that he attributes to lack of discipline the great weakness of contemporary

[18] Poética, Al Lector, page not numbered.

Spanish literature and that his aim in undertaking to write an "Arte Poética" is to introduce some definite principles of control and guidance in the literary activity of Spain.

Spain has never lacked geniuses nor has erudition been wanting, but, by some long continued ill luck, no one has ever taken the trouble to expound clearly in Spanish those rules without whose help, genius, necessary as it is, can never hope to create perfect work. Indeed it is to this mistaken faith in the absolute power of unaided genius that Spanish letters owe their present low state, particularly in the dramatic field.*

Had Lope and Calderón realized the necessity of application and "art," Spain would now possess comedies which by their perfection would arouse the envy of all the cultured nations.[19]

The excessive reliance of these authors on unaided genius made them write plays which, for the most part, were to be open to the criticisms and ridicule of educated foreigners.*

Those early Spanish poets who should have become national models were soon forgotten; pompous style, quibbles, far-fetched metaphors and the like, soon deceived the vulgar and bestowed on their authors the glory which rightly belongs only to good poets. Lope increased the confusion with his "Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias," a work not worthy to be printed with the other writings of that author. No one dared face the situation and make the effort necessary to set the vulgar on the right road. The task, though a hard one, ought to have tempted those who claimed to love the letters of their country.

Luzán, though keenly aware of his limitations, is going to undertake this work for the sake of the literary reputation of the nation.[20]

This prologue to the first book then is the confession of faith of Luzán. It shows him to be sane and patriotic. He sees clearly the need of a curb for the splendid genius of his countrymen. Never for a moment does he entertain any doubts as to the real value of that genius but he regrets that a failure to direct it has made it possible for foreigners to scorn the literature of Spain. Spain has lacked fearless critics. Its best writers have been led astray by vanity and have drifted into all forms of literary affectation through laziness. Hopeless as the task may seem, Luzán, by introducing the rules, is going to start a new movement which, in course of time, will enable Spain to make the right use of its powers.

Luzán's plan as carried out in the "Arte Poética" was to state the technical matter which he felt was needed and, from time to time, as occasion called for it, to criticize prominent authors who illustrated positively or negatively the usefulness of the rules stated. This method was

[19] Poética, Bk. I, Proemio, p. 5.
[20] Poética, p. 78.

of course the logical one from a pedagogical standpoint. In all cases the illustration followed the rule. For us, however, who are trying to make up our mind on the real attitude of Luzán towards the Spanish authors whom he criticizes, this method is not the most advantageous. The technical matter being more bulky by far than that dealing with criticism, the latter does not appear to the reader as a whole and for that reason its spirit is not always easy to grasp.

With a view to segregating the literary criticism from the dogma, with each of the first three books we are going to make first a résumé of the neo-classic material it contains, following this with a review of the judgments passed on authors in the course of the technical discussion.

The Technical Matter of Book I.—The first book is entitled "De el Origen, Progressos y Esencia de la Poesía." As might be expected it sketches rapidly the history of poetry following the outline given by Scaliger and Benio.

Poetry took its rise in Egypt, soon becoming the exclusive property of the learned classes, who tried to teach religion by its means and thus it became the tool of idolatry.

Later it passed to Greece where it broke up into its various genres, the epic, the tragedy, the comedy, lyrical poetry and the satire. One more migration brought it to Rome where it saw flourishing days but where it never reached the perfection to which it had attained among the Greeks.[21]

Poetry in vulgar tongues appeared first in Sicily. It was introduced rather late into Spain and we shall learn of its fate in that country when we come to deal with Luzán's critical ideas.

Pursuing, for the present, our review of the technical points, we find stated in the third chapter that the Greeks and the Romans aimed equally to teach and to please. The Iliad contained excellent political advice for the use of Greek rulers. It delighted the average reader with its true rendering of the simplicity of Greek life in which the herding of cattle was considered a noble occupation and where the daughters of princes went to the fountain to fetch water. Luzán does not quite dare say "to wash clothes."

Just as these matters were typical of Greek life, the use of mythological machinery was fitting enough in Roman literature. By the same token, now that idolatry is a thing of the past, Jupiter and all the other gods must be replaced by angels, demons, and magicians who satisfy the requirements of verisimilitude.[22]

The chapter ends with this plea for the "merveilleux chrétien" which

[21] Poética, p. 13. In this discussion Luzán refers to J. M. Crescimbeni.
[22] Poética, p. 28.

has helped Menéndez y Pelayo to strengthen his thesis that, in so far as Luzán represents a foreign influence, it is not French but Italian since, as is well known, Boileau would have banished from serious literature miracles and those who bring them about.*

Treating of the essence and definition of poetry, Luzán can agree neither with Minturno nor with Aristotle as cited by Benio. He ends by giving his own definition: "Imitación de la Naturaleza en lo Universal ó en lo Particular hecha con versos para utilidad ó para deleite de los hombres ó para uno y otro juntamente." [23] This leads to a discussion of the nature of imitation and the reasons why imitation is pleasant to man. The explanation is certainly typical of the century in which Luzán wrote. What could be more naïvely rationalistic than the following statement: "Como nada hai más dulce ni más agradable para nuestro espíritu que el aprender, nuestro entendimiento cotejando la Imitacîon con el objecto imitado se alegra de aprender que ésta "es la tal cosa" y al mismo tiempo se deleita en conocer y admirar la perfección de el Arte. Por eso nos deleitan pintados los monstruos más feos.[24]

After making the comparison between poetry and painting which is *"de rigueur"* * in a neo-classic discussion, Luzán analyzes the nature of imitation, concluding that it is of two kinds; namely, imitation of what is universal and of what is particular.*

Imitation of what is universal means the imitation of subjects which can be idealized. Human character belongs to that class since, through the freedom of the will, it is capable of greater perfection than that which it now possesses. If the poet lets his imagination alter human character for the better, he will be effective and useful since he is painting, if not from a real model, at least from a possible one.

This reasoning disposes of the argument of those who claim that imagination has no place in literature because it violates the principle that no image is effective whose model is not known to exist.

The way of looking at the matter which has just been refuted holds all its force in the case of natural or inanimate objects which were created perfect by God and which are thereby incapable of any improvement. Exact reproduction by the artist is the only rule in their case, "porque nada le irá á la mano en las flores conque pretenda matizar el Prado, ni en las colores conque quira arrebolar la Aurora, como sean naturales." [25]

To be sure, immediately after this discussion, which leaves such a loophole for free fancy, Luzán hastens to add that, even in the treatment of what is ideal, the writer must keep the particular in mind sufficiently

[23] Poética, p. 32.
[24] Poética, p. 36.
[25] Poética, p. 53.

to fall in with the requirements of verisimilitude. The fact remains that the critic has shown a possible legitimate use for the powers of the imagination and this will enable him later to admire consistently the works of poets whose imagination might well have appeared extravagant to more orthodox neo-classic critics.

Luzán gives us another instance of his desire to be liberal. After enumerating the possible methods of literary imitation, namely direct, indirect and by pure narration,[26] Luzán explains in two chapters the purpose and use of poetry. It must delight and it must teach. Long poems, however, are the only ones which must satisfy each of these requirements. Very short compositions need comply with only one of them. If certain short poems may be only useful, others may well be written purely to delight the reader and in such cases he need not feel compelled to point out a moral. But such latitude is exceptional, and the fact remains that the great duty of the poet is to teach morals.

Philosophy is not able to accomplish that purpose to any considerable degree because it is meant for the few, its light being too brilliant for average eyes. It is the function of poetry to soften the light of philosophy so that it will guide and not dazzle the intellect of the seekers after truth. To be more specific, epic poems and tragedies teach right living to princes; comedies direct the conscience of the common herd. As for lyric poetry, though much of it is merely lascivious and debasing, it often occurs to authors to introduce into such compositions discreet hints bearing a moral purpose.[27]

The Technical Matter of Book II.—This discussion marks the transition from the first to the second book of the "Arte Poética." It leads naturally to a eulogy of didactic poetry upon which follow three chapters dealing with "Sweetness" and with "Beauty" which are the means by which poetry accomplishes its useful mission.

By sweetness, Luzán means the ability to arouse the emotion of the reader, while beauty is the union of variety, unity, regularity, order and proportion, all adorning truth.

This dogmatic statement that beauty can not exist apart from truth is tempered by the discussion on the kinds of truths. Truth, we find, may be scientific or it may be ideal, and the two kinds may be found in one and the same work. Ideal truth is simply that kind of truth which exists only on condition of the acceptance of a certain hypothesis. As a matter of fact any flight of the imagination may be termed truthful, if only things are granted before the flight is taken. "No es verdad absoluta, antes bien es falso, que la presencia de una Dama haga reverdecer el

[26] Poética, ch. x-xi.

[27] Poética, pp. 59-63.

prado y nacer á cada passo azuzenas y claveles que codiciosos y atrevidos aspiran á la dicha de ser pisados de tan hermosos pies; pero en la hypóthesis de que las flores tuviesen sentido y conocimiento de la hermosura de aquella Dama y estuviessen tan enamoradas como el Poeta; es verdad que formarían tales pensamientos y tendrían tales deseos." [28]

It is clear that this method of making the irrational rational is so simple and efficient that, thanks to it, the imagination wins in freedom as much again as the author had been willing to grant it through his discussion on the possibility of idealizing the qualities of the human mind.

It is difficult, in a case of this type, to tell whether Luzán wants to prove that the imagination ought to be fairly free or whether he intends to show that even extreme imagination is indebted to reason. His criticism does not help us very much because, as we shall see, there are times when he swings from a position of fair liberality to one of great narrowness. In this very part of his work, if we pass rapidly over the next three chapters,[29] we shall reach a fourth, which rather destroys the impression made by the matters just discussed.

We may indeed dismiss the three chapters mentioned by simply noting that the first states that truth is not always credible, the second dwells on the aid given to a plot by style, while the last contains the usual arguments in favor of improving nature, copying only "la belle nature." *

This leaves us at liberty to consider the twelfth chapter which is an attack on free fancy. In it we learn that all impressions come to the soul through the senses, and that the soul, viewed from two angles, is imagination and also intellect. Of these two aspects of the soul, the intellectual one is the higher. The intellect by itself is capable of accomplishing great things in art and in science. The intellect and the imagination working in harmony, also give excellent results, but if the imagination is left in control of the whole field of activity, the result is nothing but disorder and confusion.

Untrammeled imagination has no place in poetry nor in the discourses of men of sense. It belongs to those "que ó dormidos sueñan ó calenturientos desvarían ó enloquecidos desatinan." [30]

Yet we have been told once that what is of the human soul can be freely idealized and, by a trick of casuistry, we have been shown, in another instance, that the most far-fetched figures could be brought within the realm of reason.

We may find the explanation to this apparent contradiction in what

[28] Poética, p. 103.
[29] Poética, ch. ix-xi.
[30] Poética, p. 124.

may be the key to Luzán's criticisms, namely, that in the last analysis, his judgments were based not on rules but on common sense. In Chapter XIII of this same book, we find this advice which is in no way didactic: "Considerar bien lo que hace ó no hace el caso y quitar todo lo que puede dañar á su designo aunque lo que se quita sea un gran pensamiento al parecer ó una expresión de las más elegantes ó ingeniosas; que no perderá por eso la descripción antes bien ganará mucho y será más bella porque más propicia y más del caso." [31]

Such a passage, considered in the light of other statements of a liberal character, would tend to show that what Luzán hoped from the rules was a prompting and guiding power, not a tyrannical sway over the common sense of the writers of his country.

The other technical points contained in the second book of the "Poética" can be briefly summarized as follows:

We are told again that all artistic conceptions must be based on truth whether real, possible, or probable. We learn that verisimilitude requires a proper relationship to exist between characters and the words which they speak. Styles are classified as noble, humble and moderate. A fitting literary diction is shown to be as necessary to a genre as good clothes to a person.[32]

The last chapter, enumerating and describing the kinds of meters used in Spanish, ends with a statement which tends to strengthen the reader's opinion that Luzán's respect for the rules, though quite noticeable, was by no means absolute. Quoting Boileau's "La rime est une esclave et ne doit qu'obéir," he adds "si bien no es razón que se detenga muy de espacio en componer cada verso . . . ni que vaya, como de puerta en puerta, llamando á cada una de las reglas que hemos propuesto." [33]

The Literary Criticism of Books I and II.—Now that we have scanned the theoretical portion of the first two books of the "Poética," we are at liberty to turn our attention to the passages dealing with actual authors. Let us turn from Luzán the "savant en us" to Luzán the literary critic.

It is in connection with his brief sketch of the development of poetry in the vulgar tongues that Luzán begins to mention famous Spanish poets and to express his literary likes and dislikes.

The literary movement which had arisen in Italy was brought to Spain by Boscán and by the Marquis of Santillana. The work of these

[31] Poética, p. 143.

[32] Poética, ch. xvi, xvii, xix, xxi, xxii.

[33] Poética, p. 270.

worthy poets was gloriously crowned by the matchless poems of Garcilaso de la Vega, the prince of Castilian poetry.

The untimely death of the great lyric poet deprived Spain of the one writer whose performance, had it been completed, would have atoned for the failings of those who followed him. As it was, good taste died with him.[34]

Luzán, realizing the duties of the fearless critic, does not hesitate to lay at the door of Lope de Vega Carpio and of Luis de Góngora the responsibility for the sudden decadence of Spanish literature in the XVII century. To be sure he is ready to grant these writers much natural genius and lyric fire. "Góngora dotado de ingenio y de phantasía muy viva. . . . Lope á quien nadie puede con razón negar las alabanzas debidas á las raras prendas de que le adornó Naturaleza, á su feliz y vasto ingenio, á su natural facilidad." Yet in spite of these great gifts, Góngora fell into a style most florid, void of ideas, replete with extravagant metaphors and quibbles, while Lope invented "I know not what system or method of writing comedies" which was in absolute opposition to the rules of sense and which corrupted the taste of the common people.[35]

To make matters worse, Gracián came with his "Agudeza y Arte de Ingenio." From that time good taste vanished from Spain. The grave and respectable literary genres were abandoned. The "canción," the serious sonnet, the drama, were no longer in vogue. Their places were taken by "coplas," "décimas," or "redondillas," all insignificant lyric forms which, though they were cultivated with undeniable skill and brilliancy, could never be expected to represent the spirit of poetry in all its dignity.[35]

The other judgments given by Luzán occur in connection with his treatment of figures of speech and with his attack on what he considered the greatest curse of Spanish literature, that is quibbles.*

In Chapter XIV comes the preliminary statement that metaphors are never lies, since the mind knows that it must interpret them and not take them literally. To illustrate the nature of metaphors he quotes one from Garcilaso:

"Los ojos cuya lumbre bien pudiera
Tornar clara la noche tenebrosa
Y escurer el Sol á medio día." [36]

Though the figure may seem a little extreme to us, he remarks upon it approvingly.

Wishing to illustrate more fully, he quotes from Lope and from

[34] Poética, v. I, ch. iii.
[35] Poética, p. 19.
[36] Poética, p. 150.

Argensola lines which meet with his approval and exhibit the good qualities of true lyricism, lines very different from those given out by poets who are a prey to their own disorderly imagination.

What pitfalls await such undisciplined poets will be shown clearly by a study of the nature of figures of speech.

The fundamental requirement in figures of speech is that there must be an easily discerned relationship between the object embellished or described and whatever it is embellished or described by. Thus an arrow may be said to fly, hope may be called sweet, a passion unbridled. As soon as this relationship ceases to be apparent, then we no longer have a figure of speech, but simply a piece of chaotic nonsense.[37]

Such an error is not unfrequent. Illustrations of it can be found in Spanish authors past and present. For instance Góngora, wishing to extol the rapid increase of the city of Madrid, says in a sonnet:

"Que á su menor inundación de casas
Ni aun los campos de Tajo están seguros." [38]

After condemning the lack of correspondence in the metaphor expressed in these two lines, Luzán quotes in full a sonnet written by the same author in praise of Babia's History of the Popes. The parts of the sonnet which according to Luzán are worthy of censure are the following:

"Este que Babia al mundo hoy ha ofrecido
Poema, sino á numeros atado
De la disposición antes limado
Y de la erudición despues lamido,
Historia es culta, cuyo encanecido
Estilo, sino métrico, peinado
Tres yá Pilotos de el bajel sagrado
Hurta al tiempo y redima de el olvido.
* * * * * * *
Pluma pues que claveros celestiales
Eterniza en los bronces de su historia
Llave es yá de los tiempos y no pluma.

Ella á sus nombres puertas immortales
Abre no de caduca no, memoria
Que sombras sella en túmulos de espuma?" [39]

Gates opened by means of a pen, the play on the words "limado" and "lamido," a gray-headed style which steals pilots, are conceptions surpassed in absurdity only by the final words "Que sombras sella en túmulos

[37] Poética, pp. 163-164.
[38] Poética, p. 163.
[39] Poética, p. 165.

de espuma." This line, says Luzán, is so altisonant, as to make one think, at first, that it means something, then that impression vanishes, for the line is a riddle whose solution requires careful study. "Me reí muchisimo quando con algo de trabajo llegué á desentrañarle el sentido." "Sellar sombras" means to print, and the foam referred to is merely paper ready for the press.[40]

His amusement soon turns to bitterness when he reflects upon the fact that such extravagant expressions have won for their perpetrator the title of "Príncipe de los poetas lýricos," usurping this title from those who, like Garcilaso, Lupercio Leonardo, or Herrera or Camõens have every right to be crowned with it.

Dealing with quibbles he quotes these lines from Calderón:

"Ardo y lloro sin sosiego
Llorando y ardiendo tanto:
Que ni al fuego apaga el llanto
Ni al llanto consume el fuego." [41]

"De la misma estofa es otro concepto de Góngora en un soneto á San Ignacio:

"Ardiendo en aguas muertas llamas vivas." [42]

How far below the style of a Garcilaso, or a Solís or a Luis de Ulloa! Such exaggerations ought to be allowed only in burlesque style or on the rare occasions when the poet has to feign madness. As a matter of fact, these unbearable absurdities are so admired that any one criticizing them exposes himself to violent censure on the part of the untutored majority.

Luzán is not frightened by this expected attack: he knows the strength of his position. The champions of extravagance will not be able to prove that he is wrong while men of sense and learning will always take up his defense.

Too great subtlety in thought and a pedantic display of learning are other faults which delight the vulgar and discredit poets in the eyes of those who know the rules of serious literary criticism. Lope on one occasion was guilty of an absurd display of technical terms of music. This meant nothing as to his real knowledge of that art. Either he had glanced at a text book on the subject or else he had spent a half-hour chatting with a choir-master.* Yet the average reader was deeply impressed by this array of terms which brought a smile to the lips of those possessed of the elements of musical notation.

[40] Poética, p. 166.
[41] Poética, p. 173.
[42] Poética, p. 176.

To illustrate over-subtlety in thought * Luzán does not have to arouse the anger of his countrymen, for Muratori suggests to him these rather indefensible lines from Corneille's *Cid:*

"Pleurez, pleurez mes yeux et fondez vous en eau
La moitié de ma vie a mis l'autre au tombeau
Et m'oblige à venger, après ce coup funeste,
Celle que je n'ai plus sur celle qui me reste." [43]

"El pensar á estas mitades de vida, á la mitad que murió en su padre y á la mitad que se quedó en su amante, y que la una mitad la obliga á vengar su agravio en la otra: es pensar demasiadamente."

Having shown his broadmindedness by censuring a writer who was not a Spaniard, Luzán further disarms his enemies-to-come by finding again good lines in Lope. This author, says Luzán, excels in the jocular style as for instance when, after describing with many pompous words and figures, a mountain and a waterfall, he finally admits that:

". . . en este monte y líquida laguna
Para decir verdad como hombre honorado
Jamás me sucedió cosa ninguna." [44]

On the whole these literary judgments leave us with a much more favorable opinion of the author's discretion than his treatment of theoretical points. It becomes fairly evident that the "preceptista" does not interfere seriously with the critic. To have uncompromisingly placed Garcilaso above Lope and Góngora without ever denying to these two poets the praise which they actually deserved, because of their brilliant qualities, was to give evident proof of a well balanced judgment united with a keen esthetic sense.

The Technical Matter of Book III.—The third and fourth books which deal with the Drama and the Epic contain certain chapters which, while they make Luzán's work a logical whole, are of no practical value. Their aridity and their mechanical character are such that they had no guiding influence on subsequent writers. For this reason we shall now make use of the right which we reserved for ourselves to put all such matter in foot-notes.*

If we follow the main line of Luzán's argument in his treatment of the drama, we shall find that it resolves itself into two principles. First comes the constant necessity of keeping in mind the requirements of verisimilitude. Second the necessity of a moral purpose in all dramatic productions.

[43] Poética, p. 198.
[44] Poética, p. 232.

It is in the name of verisimilitude that Luzán strives to give the three unities their most exacting definition. His insistence on strct adherence to the unity of plot is praiseworthy but he loses our sympathy when we are made to read a long argument to the effect that a tragedy can represent only an action which in real life would last only the hours required for the performance of an ordinary play.[45]

We grow still less enthusiastic at his suggestion to lessen the rigidity of the unity of place by introducing a manner of medieval stage divided into booths by either vertical or horizontal partitions. By this scheme authors would have the choice of the various rooms of a house or of adjacent portions of a city without breaking the sacred unity of place. Such a puerile suggestion puts Luzán the "preceptista" in a position of still greater inferiority towards Luzán the literary critic.

Other points on which Luzán displays no great originality are the matter of excluding violent death scenes from the stage, the requiring of unity of character for the main personages and, on the contrary, an absence of distinct personality in the confidents or *confidentes*.[46]

On the subject of diction, Luzán talks as if he were not a poet himself. He admits that some form of verse is required as the medium of dramatic expression but he condemns rhyme. He is willing to compromise on the Spanish ballad verse, which is nearly as good as prose, since it only rhymes in assonance. He even goes so far as to blame Christóbal de Mesa simply because in his tragedy entitled "Pompeyo" "no solo están dispuestos los consonantes á modo de canciones, mas también hay tercetos, octavas, coplas, décimas y otros génros de rimas cuyo conocido artificio se opone directamente á la verisimilitud." [47]

We recognize the same prosaic spirit in the warning which Luzán gives in the matter of costume. The garb of an actor must be true to life but it must respect the laws of decorum. If a peasant girl is to appear on the stage she must be dressed in her holiday attire.

These rather trivial rulings together with more useful ones, as, for instance, the recommendation to limit the number of actors to a very few, arise from the same principle. Luzán has adopted unconditionally the principle that "la Poesía dramatica es un engaño." By hook or crook the audience must be deceived into believing that the imitation of life presented to it is life itself. "Á esto miran todas las reglas que tanto se encargan á los Poetas á cerca de la verisimilitud de la fábula, de lás costumbres, de la sentencia y locución." [48]

[45] Poética, ch. v.
[46] Poética, ch. x.
[47] Poética, p. 381.
[48] Poética, p. 395.

As might be expected, the tragi-comedy is condemned but we are surprised to discover that Corneille is severely taken to task for having introduced this hermaphroditic genre.[49]

The Literary Criticism of Book III.—We have now reached the point where the technical and the theoretical matter of the drama is exhausted. The tragi-comedy has been dealt with. The logical step to take next is to study the Spanish Comedia.

In treating the drama of his country, as in his discussion of lyric poetry, Luzán gives proof of a much better critical sense than one might have been led to expect from his handling of the theoretical side of the question.

His minute description of a perfectly mechanical way to construct a plot,[50] his strict adherence to the three unities, his begrudging to poetry the right to have a place in dramatic expression, might well have been taken as promises of a downright condemnation of the Comedia.

It is a pleasant surprise to discover that, on the contrary, his treatment of the Comedia reveals a sympathetic attitude towards the genre and that his praise of it, if less detailed, is more sweeping and comprehensive than his adverse criticism.

The names of authors whom we are accustomed to count among the most antagonistic to any discipline come in for a good share of praise. Luzán indulges in the warmest praise of Lope de Vega for the natural facility of his style and for his skill in depicting certain Spanish types and customs. He admires Calderón for his skillfully handled plots and forgives him his stylistic excesses and vagaries to the extent of saying "admiro la nobleza de su locución que sin ser jamás obscura, ni afectada, es siempre elegante." In such plays as "Primero soy yo," "Dar tiempo al tempo," "Dicha y desdicha de nombre," "No hay burlas con el amor" the critic finds much that is worthy of praise and nothing, or practically nothing, deserving blame.[51] Twice he mentions with admiration Moreto's "El Desdén con el Desdén."* He finds sufficient respect for the rules in Zamora's "El Hechizado por fuerza." Candamo and Cañizares also have written plays which put them in the class of authors to be admired. Among the plays of the last named author, Luzán mentions with particular favor "El Dómine Lucas" and admires him for having been one of the few Spanish authors who gave really comical qualities to their main characters instead of concentrating all the fun-making in the deeds and words of the "gracioso." *

[49] Poética, p. 425.

[50] See note 1.

[51] Poética, p. 349.

To sum up then, there is much that is excellent in the Spanish Comedia, and particularly in the matter of plot, for Spanish authors "se han desempeñado con bastante acierto y facilidad del enredo y solución de sus comedias." To be sure, absolute praise of the genre would be as unjust as absolute condemnation. In remarking upon the weak points of Spanish plays, Luzán's sincere desire is to come to a fair and sane judgment and to point out which ones of the rules can not be infringed upon without some loss in artistic effect. The danger of not following certain rules could be amply illustrated by the examination of plays written by others than Spanish authors. It so happens, however, that the foreign drama is practically unknown in Spain. If Luzán chooses all his unfavorable illustrations from the Spanish stage, it is not due to any unpatriotic desire to attack his own country. He does it from a desire to be clearly understood by his countrymen, showing them familiar * instances of the errors incurred by writing without the guidance of reason.

The censure of the Spanish stage comes under two headings as we have already stated. Spanish comedies in many cases fail to fulfill the moral requirements of good plays and often they do not respect the dogma of verisimilitude.

First, then, from a moral standpoint, dashing young swashbucklers and over-resourceful lovers of both sexes are altogether too prominent in Spanish plays. The fencing skill of the former and the moral slipperiness of the latter are forever getting the better of those characters of the play who represent law, order and duty. A false ideal of personal honor and a plea for the irresponsibility of passion are thereby drilled into the minds and imaginations of the spectators; that is, they become part and parcel of the philosophy of life of the masses. To be sure, no one would object if from time to time playwrights introduced "el character de un amante ó de un duelista guapetón como otra qualquiera especie de costumbres." [52] But the constant representations of such persons, not shown in their true light, but in a blaze of glory, is downright wrong. Besides it is unartistic since all comedy heroes, drawn as they are from just two classes of human beings, are bound to resemble one another like twin brothers.* Why not try to introduce other characters such as the "miles gloriosus," the miser, the jolly friar? Thus Lope, Calderón, Moreto, Solís, and many others, in spite of other excellent quailties, sin heavily against morality and art. To show that he is defending a universal principle and not merely trying to find fault with his countrymen, Luzán censures severely the lines in which Boileau defends love plots:

[52] Poética, p. 375.

Je ne suis pas pourtant de ces tristes esprits
Qui banissant l'amour de tous chastes écrits
D'un si riche ornement veulent priver la scène
Traitant d'empoisonneurs et Rodrigue et Chimène.
L'amour le moins honnête exprimé chastement
N'excite point en nous de honteux mouvement.[53]

Far from sympathizing with such easy going morality, Luzán, were it in his power, would have a national censor appointed by the government so that no play could be presented to the public without having first been approved by a competent judge.*

Only one type of play seemed to Luzán still more dangerous than "comedias" based on themes of ultra-romantic love, and that was the Autos Sacramentales. These performances, Luzán tells us, brought discredit on the sacred subjects which formed in part the matter of their plots. They debased holy themes by mingling with them love intrigues, exhibitions of vanity and witticisms of doubtful decency. Worst of all, the authors of Autos were not satisfied with orthodox miracles, but they manufactured marvelous tales out of whole cloth. The result was that the common people in their ignorance came to believe in these new-fangled miracles with as much reverence as if they were drawn from the Holy Scriptures.*

This completes Luzán's remarks on the need of a moral reform of the Spanish stage.

The other criticisms, though not arising from such a high principle as the desire to save the nation from growing immorality, are nevertheless much to the point.

He repeats his plea for clear, simple, direct style and he shows how desirable those same qualities would be if applied to plot. If "comedias" are to be artistic and useful their intrigues must be first of all such as to be easily understood and instantly recognized as of possible occurence in real life.

Who will believe in the possibility of the stories which are the basis of Lope's "El Perro del Hortelano" and "El Ramillete de Madrid"? In the first "comedia" a lady falls in love with a servant and makes no effort to hide her passion, in the second a gentleman serves as a gardener on the estate of a high-born lady. In Moreto's "Todo es enredos amor," the heroine, Doña Elena, wishing to spy on her lover's private life, leaves for Salamanca, dressed as a student, and, in the course of the action, impersonates no fewer than three different characters. "¿En quál de estos casos se divisa algun rastro de verisimilitud? ¿Quál de ellos puede ser

[53] Poética, p. 368.

espejo de la vida humana?" Such happenings have never taken place in Spain. To relate them is as futile an undertaking as to try to compose a useful play on mythological subjects which have lost, together with their allegorical meaning, their power to point out a moral.[54]

In dealing with the application of the three unities, Luzán finds a rich field for criticism of the most adverse type. The Spanish Comedia having so often drawn its plots from the tales of the Italian Renaissance, from the romances of chivalry or from medieval chronicles, paid no attention to these rules. Luzán can easily gather a formidable list of plays possessed of enormous defects. Lope's "La locura por la honra" contains three actions; there are cases of comedies concentrating in a few hours the deeds and happenings of three, nine, twenty and even two hundred years; others take the spectator on flying trips through a half-dozen countries, the characters "andando con gran frescura y sin cansancio algunos centenares de leguas." *

Added to such unartistic elements are the countless remnants of medieval fancy or ignorance which the Comedia has cherished and saved from well deserved oblivion. "Yo he oído no sin mucha risa nombrar el conde Antenor, al conde Eneas en la Comedia de 'Hector y Achilles' de no sé qué autor." [55] References to gunpowder in plays dealing with antiquity, stories of men sailing across the sea on their shields, and the grossest errors in geography complete the arraignment of the Comedia.[55] "Paréceme que los exemplos propuestos bastarán para aviso de los Poetas que de hoy más quisieren aplicarse á escribir según las reglas y con el debido miramiento." *

We have now reviewed the favorable and the unfavorable criticisms of Luzán on the Comedia. With the exception of some of the remarks on what constitutes a probable plot, his judgments seem just and intelligent. The points of which he can not approve are precisely those which shock the modern reader. What he praises is also what meets with universal approval. No one can seriously admire the extravagance of plot and language which so often disfigures the plays of even the best authors, and yet no one can deny the admirable qualities of these compositions when judged from the standpoint of dash and vivacity of plot or brilliancy of diction.

The following sentence from Luzán, while defining his attitude on the matter, expresses also the modern opinion on the Comedia: "Si los que absolutamente y sin excepción condenan las Comedias se dejan llevar de un zelo excesivo, los que en ella aprueban indistintamente los amores

[54] Poética, p. 416.
[55] Poética, p. 421.

y argumentos perniciosos como el único y más divertido asunto de el Theatro, se dejan sin duda llevar de una licencia desreglada." [56]

Book IV.—There is nothing in the fourth book of the Poética which can shed any further light on Luzán as a critic. It is a purely didactic discussion of the Epic.* In it, Luzán simply follows the treatise of Father Le Bossu. It would be an unprofitable task to study the definition of the Epic, and it would be futile to discuss whether or not Homer and Virgil, in the composition of their great works, followed the altogether unassailable method given by Le Bossu for the composition of perfect plots. Rather let us pass to the more vital question of the way in which the "Arte Poética" of Luzán was received in Spain.

Judgments Passed on the Poética.—The opinion which is sometimes expressed that Luzán attacked the writers of his country in a spirit of narrowness and extreme prejudice is as wrong as that which implies that Luzán was fighting a stupendous fight single-handed.

Official Judgments.—The attitude of mind of the men who wrote the "Aprobación" and the "Crítica" of the "Poética," two documents required by law to be prefixed to every new book, and the judgments of the critics who had founded the "Diario de los Literatos" shows that, besides Luzán, there were in Spain intelligent men who fully appreciated the real qualities and the real defects of Spanish literature.

The "Aprobación" written by one Fr. Miguel Navarro states that in the "Poetica," the blame cast upon many authors is compensated by the praise which these same writers receive in various parts of the work.*

The author of the "Censura," Fr. Manuel Gallinero, brings up the case of Molière who had plenty of genius and little reverence for the rules of Aristotle. It is clear that this reviewer does not altogether agree with Luzán on the usefulness of applying the "esprit de géométrie" to literature, but his attitude is in no way hostile, for he ends his remarks by admitting that, in all cases, the author's criticisms were meant "no para golpear, sino precisamente para medir."

The Diario's Review of the Poética.—The "Diario,"* a literary review, which we shall take up more in detail presently, gave an impartial résumé of the "Poética" and admitted that it had filled a long felt want in Spanish literature. "De ningún escrito tenía más necesidad nuestra España que de una entera y cabal Poética." [57] The mighty nation of the Poets had gone too long with no other guide than its fancy; all critics until this one had been altogether too lenient.

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[56] Poética, p. 373.

[57] Diario, v. IV, art. 1.

This favorable statement which began the review of the "Diario" was followed by others not quite so flattering.

First of all it struck the "Diario" that Luzán was too hard on Lope in the matter of the "Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias." By emphasizing those parts where Lope seems to praise the rules and by dismissing as clever "boutades" the cases where he appears to condemn them, the "Diario" tried to reconcile Lope with literary orthodoxy. It dwelt at length on the tyrannical powers of the mob in the seventeenth century audiences and insinuated that Lope did not take his plays seriously since he had written them merely as a sop to satisfy the demand of the illiterate "patio" for the romanesque.

Far from accusing Lope of having written his "Arte Nuevo" in defense of his own plays it would be more nearly right to consider that work a disguised way of criticizing "comedias." "Su obra en realidad más es 'Arte nuevo de criticar comedias' que de hacerlas." [58]

The argument would therefore tend to put Lope and Luzán in the same literary school, and ingenious as the reasoning is, it fails to carry conviction with it.

What is decidedly amusing is the solemn way in which the "Diario" censures Luzán for not having picked his illustrations from the six plays which Lope confesses having written in accordance with the rules.* Had Luzán been able to detect errors in any one of these six plays, then indeed he would have scored a victory. He would have proved that Lope did not possess the knowledge necessary to write a regular play, since his best efforts were faulty.

As a matter of fact Luzán was not to blame in the matter. To suspect him of having neglected to make use of an easy way to justify the Spanish stage in the eyes of foreign neo-classic critics, was as much as accusing him of high treason. Had the plays been known to him he would certainly have made use of them.

The facts of the case are that Lope had never given out the names of those six Aristotelian daughters of his brain. Whether Luzán tried hard or not at all to find these plays is not known. What is known is that, for fully a half a century after Luzán, Spanish scholars made every effort to discover plays written according to the rules and all these accumulated efforts never succeeded in crediting Lope with a single regular drama.

No doubt then that the editors of the "Diario" threw out this suggestion because it fitted well in their argument, not realizing the impossibility of giving it any practical application.

Taking up Luzán's study of the poem of Góngora which in the crit-

[58] Diario, v. IV, p. 86.

ic's mind typified the worst that was to be found from the standpoint of extravagance of language, the "Diario" found again that the judgments expressed were too harsh.[59]

The reviewer claimed that the expression "claveros celestiales" was an adequate and dignified metaphor, since it had been used by Christ who said to Saint Peter "Tibi dabo claves regni coelorum." It was a perfectly reasonable way of referring to the Popes. Following this statement came a paraphrase of the sonnet showing how every concept could be made to fit into a rational whole of easy comprehension. To be sure the last two lines needed elucidation as Luzán's explanation did not suit the reviewer. Unfortunately the new explanation of the "puzzling" passage is about as obscure as the passage itself. We leave the discussion feeling that, if Luzán was too severe in comdemning the poem as a whole, the writer of the essay reviewing Luzán failed disastrously in picking out any flaw in his interpretation of the last two lines of the sonnet.*

The probable cause of this opposition to the literary judgments of Luzán lies in the fact that the author of the review failed to realize that Luzán judged literary works quite independently of the Aristotelian code. Luzán's critics feared that if he agreed heartily with what was said in the "Poética" about Lope and Góngora, he would in a way be taking an oath of fidelity to the rules, since it seemed to him that the rules had dictated the opinions expressed about these authors.

This hostility towards precepticism "per se" again makes its appearance when the reviewer proceeds to defend the tragi-comedy, anticipating the critics of the Romantic School by making the statement that life itself is a mingling of the tragic and the comic. He also attacks the really very narrow interpretation given by Luzán to the unities, particularly to that of time, for he has no sympathy with those parts of the Aristotelian doctrine which simply tend to choke genius. His attitude towards the rules is free from any superstitious respect. "Las reglas dramáticas no son más que fueros particulares del genio y gusto de cada siglo y de cada nación como lo acredita la historia del theatro antiguo y moderno.[60]

This of course is in absolute opposition to the opinion of Luzán, who, as we remember, had begun his "Poética" by proving to his own satisfaction the universal and eternal character of the rules.

The impression derived from all this is that the writer of the "Diario's" review was not as different from Luzán in his critical opinions as he believed he was. Only he was not one of those minds who feel it imperative

[59] Diario, v. IV, p. 97.
[60] Diario, v. IV, p. 106.

to connect, somehow or other, their intuitive judgments with a definite set of rules rationally evolved. No more than Luzán was he ready to praise the school of Góngora. "Con la defensa de los referidos puntos en que Lope ó Góngora no deben la más favorable censura al Señor Luzán; no se pretende canonizar generalmente todo lo que han escrito estos dos célebres Poetas, ni condenar tampoco, todos los juicios que sobre la calidad de sus obras y carácter de sus conceptos forma nuestro Autor: no pudiendo negarse que muchas de ellas son hijas de la más sana crítica y muy conducentes al desengaño público." [61] Later the critic praises Luzán for the excellence of his judgment in the selection of the majority of his illustrations, for the clearness and the amenity of his style.

Let us say it again, fundamentally the two men agree: there only remains this difference, namely, that Luzán, partly out of a natural bent towards argumentation, partly out of policy, wished to connect taste with logic at least theoretically. His reviewer did not see clearly how slight was the connection between Luzán's theory and his practice.*

Luzán's Reply.—Under the anagram of Don Iñigo de Lanuza, Luzán published a pamphlet of some 150 pages to reply to the criticisms of the "Diario." * It is merely a restatement of the points criticised by the "Diario." Luzán stands by the judgments to which he had given utterance in the "Poética." He cites more authorities and in a case or two points out an error made by the reviewer.* Nothing new is brought out by this paper so far as facts or theory are concerned. What is noticeable is the tone of perfect affability which rules the style of this little discussion. There is no display of wit at the expense of the opponent, nor is anger shown, but everywhere courtesy, directness and sincerity prevail.

Luzán is so far from having been ruffled by the criticism of the "Diario," that he thanks the author of the review for the mildness of his remarks, deploring that such courtesy is not shown to the editors of the "Diario." * He goes even farther in his desire to treat the "Diario" fairly. Though he does not give in on any of the arguments in question, he admits that perhaps his thrusts at Lope have been too many and too sharp. His excuse is the novelty of the attempt. His criticism attacked the works of Lope in the spirit of a soldier who, sword in hand, enters a long besieged city. "En el calor de esta acción no era fácil contener tan á raya las expressiones y voces que alguna no exceda tal vez algún tanto ó en el objeto ó en el modo." [62]

To be sure a petty mind might easily have found several occasions for bitter retorts to the remarks of the "Diario," but Luzán was a man

[61] Diario, v. IV, p. 99.
[62] Discurso Ap., p. 75.

gifted with plenty of generosity and good sense. He was broad-minded enough to see that the cause for which the "Diario" had been founded was the very one for which he himself had published his "Poética" and that, in spite of a few superficial differences, the "Diaristas" were his most capable allies.*

The Influence of the Poética.—Before taking up more in detail the study of the "Diario," let us say just a few words on the matter of the influence of the "Poética" of Luzán.

We stated, at the beginning of this chapter, that the influence of Luzan's book had been unequaled in directing the neo-classic movement. This opinion has been defended with as much vigor as it has been attacked. Ticknor on one hand and Quintana on the other present the most widely divergent views. According to the American scholar the "Poética" was a great power in the neo-classic movement, a power so great that its influence can scarcely be overestimated.[63] Quintana on the other hand states that the book was little read and promptly forgotten.*

Of these two opinions it would seem that Ticknor is nearer the truth. Quintana is undoubtedly right in saying that the "Poética" was little read, but it must be borne in mind that the men who did peruse the work of Luzán were precisely the men who were in the forefront of the neo-classic movement and to them the "Poética" became the great source from which could be drawn the ideas and the facts necessary to the defense and development of their cause. It may be said, without exaggeration, that the neo-classic movement is the slow but sure diffusion of the principles of the "Poética" throughout the various classes of Spanish society.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II.

P. 23. For life of Luzán see "Memorias de la Vida de Don Ignacio de Luzán escritas por su hijo Don Juan de Luzán," B. A. E., v. LXI. Also Menéndez y Pelayo, Ideas Estéticas, v. V, pp. 169-205.

P. 24. The full title is, "La Poética ó Reglas de la Poesia en general y de Sus Principales Especies, Por Don Ignacio de Luzán, Claramunt de Suelves y Gurrea, Entre los Académicos Ereinos de Palermo, llamado Egidio Menalipo," Zaragoza, 1737. All references are to this first edition of the "Poética." A second edition appeared in 1789 given out by Antonio de Sancha. The editor of this second edition introduced various changes which make it less useful to those who wish to study Luzán himself.

P. 25. Poética, p. 3. ". . . esta necia presumpción que á ella como á una de las principales causas puede con razón atribuirse la corrupción de la Poesía de el siglo pasado, particularmente en lo que toca al Theatro. No digo que para formar

[63] Note page 74.

un perfecto Poeta, no sea absolutamente necessario el ingenio y natural talento, pero digo con Horacio que eso solo no basta sin el Arte y estudio, y que el compuesto tan feliz, como raro de arte e ingenio, de estudio y de naturaleza es el que solo puede hacer un Poeta digno de tal nombre y del aplauso común."

P. 25. Poética, p. 6. "Lo qual dió motivo á las indecorosas expressiones conque el P. Bouhours en sus diálogos de Aristo y Eugenio, habla de el estilo de nuestra Nación."

P. 27. Menéndez y Pelayo. Ideas Estéticas, v. V, p. 169. "De los Franceses únicamente cita—Lamy, Boileau, Rapin, Dacier, Le Bossu, Corneille, Crousaz." As a matter of fact Luzán cites only two more Italian authors than he does Frenchmen. His Italian sources come from the works of Muratori, Vettori, Benio, Minturno, Gravina, Monsignani, Orsi, Crescimbeni, Quaradrio. The proportion is 9:7 and the whole of the last book is drawn from Le Bossu so that Menéndez y Pelayo's argument does not seem well founded.

P. 27. Poética, p. 39. "Comúnmente por esta misma razón con expresiva metáphora llámase la Poesía, Pintura de los oídos y la Pintura Poesía de los ojos."

P. 27. Poética, ch. viii. De la Imitación de lo Universal y de lo Particular. Imitation classified under the two headings: Icástica—lo particular. Phantástica—lo Universal. The latter a better help to morality than the former. Seem to correspond to realism and idealism.

P. 29. Poética. "Esto Viene á ser lo mismo que los maestros de Poética llaman mejorar ó perficionar la Naturaleza y lo que nosotros hemos dicho imitar la Naturaleza en lo Universal."

P. 31. Poética, p. 171. "El mayor y más pernicioso error que la Phantasía puede cometer si no la guía y rige el juicio es el que ahora voi á explicar . . . when figure used does not equate with the tangible or specific object described. Esto sucede siempre que la Phantasía argumenta de lo Metaphórico á lo propio y de un sentido equívoco saca un sophismo."

P. 33. Poética, p. 204. "No hay cosa más bella que la luz y el continuar á mirarla fijamente por un rato cansa la vista y aun la ciega si es muy fuerte y muy viva su brillantez. No de otra suerte las sentencias morales y las demás Reflexiones Ingeniosas cansan y enfundan quando son muy continuas. And again, p. 212, la demasiada sutileza de los pensamientos y de la locución no sirve de otra cosa que de fatigar y atarear inutilmente al Poeta y á su Lector."

P. 34. Poética, p. 73. "Bien se echa de ver que todo esto no le costó gran fatiga al Autor pues bastaba aver leído algún libro que tratasse de Música ó aver tenido un rato de conversación con un Maestro de Capilla. Pero qualquiera hombre de juicio se reirá de semejante doctrina."

P. 34. Bk. III, ch. i. Del Origen, Progressos y Definición de la Tragedia. Tragedia es una presentación Dramática de una grande mudanza de fortuna acaecida á Reyes, Príncipes, y Personages de gran calidad y dignidad cuyas caídas, muertes, disgracias, y peligros exciten terror y compassión en las animas del auditorio y los curen y purguen de estas y otras passiones sirviendo de exemplo y escarmiento á todos pero especialmente á los Reyes y á las personas de mayor autoridad y poder. Ch. ii. De la Fábula en general. Ch. iii. Del modo de formar una fábula.—Le Bossu—pick out a lesson to be taught, then fit a story to it which will be at once "universal, imitada, fingida y alegórica." Luzán prefers finding a story first, then making its moral teaching

evident. Ch. iv. De la integridad y otras condiciones de la Fábula—beginning, middle and end necessary. Ch. v. On unities. Ch. vi. De la Fábula—Simple and complex.—Complex plots preferred—must contain Peripecia y Agnición. Characters taking part may be good, or bad or indifferent. This gives six possibilities of which the following do not fit the requirements of tragedy: 1. Good becoming unfortunate. 2. Bad being fortunate. In spite of No. 1, Corneille's Polyeucte has received great applause. Also possible actions among friends, enemies and neutrals. Victim may be known or unknown, crime committed or intended. Ch. vii. On episodes. Must rise from main plot. Ch. viii. De el enredo. Ch. ix. De las Passiones Trágicas. Deaths related not acted out. Ch. x. Unity of character. Ch. xi. Verisimilitude in Speech. Ch. xii. Plea for trained actors, few characters. Ch. xiii. Five acts, no good reason. Ch. xiv. and xv. On the Comedia.

P. 36. Poética, p. 411. "El Desdén con el Desdén . . . escritas con singular acierto y muy conforme á las reglas de la Poesía dramática." Also, p. 293, remarks to the effect that "El Desdén," etc., has a logically constructed plot.

P. 36. Poética, p. 412. "Costumbres bien pintadas y mantenidas hasta el fin—graciosidad en la acción misma y en las personas principales."

P. 37. Poética, p. 410. Everybody in Spain knows the Comedies, while few know foreign works. "Fuera de que el corregir nosotros mismos nuestros yerros es ganar de la mano y hacer en cierto modo menos sensibles y menos afrentosos los baldones de los extranjeros. Y además de todo esto supuesto que los cómicos Españoles han podido errar porque no eran impecables; razón sera que alguna vez salga á campo abierto la verdad al oposito de la lisonja y del engaño."

P. 37. Poética, p. 365. "Todos los Galanes de nuestras Comedias han de ser precisamente enamorados y valientes; bastando para lo primero un retrato con quien immediatamente hacen extremos de apasionados y de ciegos; y para lo segundo una palabra ó un acaso el más leve que luego los hace entrar á ciegas en los empeños de Caballeros andantes."

P. 38. Poética, p. 377. He puts in a plea for government censors of comedies: "sujetos eruditos y entendidos de la Poética y de todas sus reglas." This idea was put into application in latter part of the century. He bases his plea on Mariana, Bk. III De Rege et Regis institutione, ch. xvi.

P. 38. Poética, p. 416. This is the first attack of the Neo-classic school on the Autos. N. F. Moratín, taking up the same idea, was to bring about the interdiction of the genre. Luzán had said "por lo irreverente y dañoso no me parece que se pueden tampoco aprobar las Comedias de Santos de que hai tan gran número en España; si alguna utilidad tienen tales comedias es tan poca que no tiene comparación con los graves daños que causan."

P. 39. Poética, p. 419. "Bernardo de el Carpio del Conde de Saldaña y otras han servido por esto de burla y mofa á un crítico Francés." Ref. of course to Boileau's "Un rimeur sans péril," etc. Other plays with vast unity of time: Genizaro de Ungria—20 years, Siete Infantes de Lara—20, Los Siete Durmientes—200 years. "Otros hai que hacen una Comedia de una Crónica entera; yo la he visto de la perdida de España y restauración de ella."

P. 39. Poética, pp. 419-423. In "El Alcázar de el Secreto" of Solís, Sigismundo sails from —"las costas de Epiro, sirviendole de bajel el escudo. . . . llegó á la isla de Chipre." Also lovers do not hide their identity sufficiently and, as for writ-

ten passages and portraits, Candamo said very well of them—"que tienen dureza intratable." Also attack on songs whose words correspond too well with the dialogue of a scene. Also oracles interrupting the play from within—"adivinando lo que iba á decir el que representa de la misma estofa son Ecos y el hablar en Sueños," and as bad as any of these the speaking of two actors who are not supposed to know of each other's presence and yet speak so as to supplement each other's dialogue perfectly. Illustration from Calderón's "Mujer llora y vencerás":

Federico. Desta música guiado.
Enrique. Llamado de estos acentos.
Federico. Vengo á pesar de enojo.
Enrique. Á pesar de ira vuelvo.
Federico. De Madona porque juzgo . . .
Enrique. De Madona porque pienso . . . etc.

"Pero esto más parece rezar á coros, que salir á representar una Comedia." L. F. Moratín was to ridicule this practice in "La Comedia Nueva."

P. 40. Bk. IV consists of the following chapters: I. De la Naturaleza y Definición del Poema Épico. Compares Benio and Le Bossu deciding that into an epic poem enter: "una acción noble y grande, personas ilustres y esclarecidas, como Reyes, etc., la instrucción moral á donde debe tirar y parar todas las líneas de la Epopeya, como á su blanco y fin principal; y finalmente el modo verisímil, admirable y deleitoso conque se debe hacer la imitación de la acción." II. De la fábula épica. Hecho ilustre y grande imitado artificiosamente á algún Rey ó Héroe ó Capitán esclarecido debajo de cuya alegoría se enseñe alguna importante máxima moral ó se proponga la idea de un perfecto Héroe militar. Method for building a plot. III. De las fábulas de los Poemas de Homero y Virgilio. IV. De las calidades y requisitos de la fábula épica. Absolute need of the marvelous. V. De los Episodios de la Fábula Épica. VI. De las costumbres en general, must be good. VII. Del Héroe. VIII. De las demás personas del Poema. IX. De las máchinas ó Deidades. Gods and machinery perfectly allowable. False gods allowed, if not introduced in a theological sense. Agrees with Boileau's "Chaque vertu devient une divinité; Minerve est la Prudence et Venus la beauté," etc. X. Divisions of the Epic poem. XI. Order of narration of events. XII. De la sentencia y locución.

P. 40. Aprobación. "En esas pues y otras páginas verán claramente el alto aprecio, que hace de nuestros cómicos en todo lo que diestramente acertaron arreglándose al Arte; conque no deberán estrañar que censure algunos estravíos substanciales." (3d page of the article—no pagination.)

P. 40. Diario de los Literatos de España; en que se reducen á Compendio los Escritos de los Autores Españoles y se hace juicio de sus Obras desde el año 1737. 7 vols., small 8°.

P. 41. Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias:

"Porque fuera de seis, las demás todas
Pecaron contra el Arte gravemente."

P. 42. Diario, v. IV, p. 99. "'Que sombras sella' esto es que guarda fingidos nombres ó ficciones (que éstas respecto de la verdad no son más que sombras) 'en túmulo de espumas' que quiere decir evidentemente en las honduras del mar donde quedó sepultado el referido Icaro. Assi lo entiende su erudito Comentador D. García Coronel y lo entenderá qualquiera intérprete desapasionado." Cueto, vol. I,

ch. vi, feels no enthusiasm for either explanation. "Tan fuera de sazón parece la alusión á la caída de Icaro, que no es dable admitirla, como tampoco la interpretación de Luzán que sería un contrasentido en el soneto de Góngora, atendida la índole perecedera del papel. Hay que confesar que no es fácil alcanzar el recóndito sentido de la memoria caduca, etc. ¿Como no anatematizar de todo corazón una literatura tan extravagante y tenebrosa?" p. 184.

P. 43. The reviewer of the "Poética" was Iriarte, the uncle of the fabulist.

P. 43. Discurso Apologético de Don Iñigo de Lanuza. Donde procura satisfacer los reparos de los señores diaristas sobre lo Poética de Don Ignacio de Luzán. En Pamplona. No date. The copy in the Ticknor collection bears on its inner cover a remark to the effect that the date may have been 1740. This note is in Ticknor's handwriting. Cueto dates it 1741.

P. 43. The reviewers had printed "puertas de la memoria" instead of "puertas de memoria." Luzán remarks that the error makes the same difference which exists between "isla de la madera" and "isla de madera."

P. 43. Discurso, p. 6. Also p. 22. "Los reparos de los Señores Diaristas sobre la Poética de Luzán aunque como he dicho no llegan á herirla en parte alguna principal; son tales y tan adornados de urbanidad y de modestia (circunstancias que resplandecen singularmente no solo en esta censura sino en las demás del Diario) que merecen con justa razón, sea público el agradecimiento como ha sido pública su moderación."

P. 44. Luzán was in Paris from 1747-1750, where he wrote his "Memorias Literarias." He became a typical eighteenth century universal genius interested in all things from chemistry to Crébillon. Became enthusiastic supporter of the "Comédie Larmoyante." In the preface to his translation of "Le Préjugé à la Mode" he made a headlong charge against the French classic stage, wondering at the "art" which made people weep at Phèdre. Men. y Pel. Ideas Est., v. III, p. 205, hails this change with glee, hoping to prove by it that Luzán came to his senses after seeing the French classic Drama at close range. As a matter of fact the only reason why Luzán preferred Nivelle de la Chaussée to Racine was because it seemed to him that the former satisfied better than the latter the demands of verisimilitude. The process does not imply a change of heart on the part of the father of neo-classicism in Spain.

P. 44. Quintana Obras. B. A. E., v. XIX, p. 147. Sobre la Poesía Castellana del Siglo XVIII. "No es de extrañar pues que fuese poco leída entonces y que por de pronto su influjo en los progresos y mejora del arte fuese corto ó mas bien nulo." On the other hand, Ticknor Hist. of Sp. Lit., v. III. Part II, p. 313: "For its purpose a better treatise could hardly have been produced. The effect was immediate and great. It seemed to offer a remedy for the bad taste which had accompanied, and in no small degree hastened the decline of the national literature from the time of Góngora."

CHAPTER III.

El Diario de Los Literatos: A Purely Spanish Manifestation of the New Spirit in Literary Criticism.

"El Diario de los Literatos" began to appear the year of the publication of Luzán's "Poética." *

The editors were M. F. Huerta, J. M. Salafranca, and L. G. Puig. None of these men were well known as authors. They belonged to the already numerous class of Spaniards who felt no superstitious respect for French ideals but who realized that these ideals contained elements which could benefit Spanish thought and Spanish life.

The Founding of the Diario.—The plan of having a regularly published book review was not an altogether new one. From the prologue of the seventh volume of the "Diario" we learn that as early as 1723 some one had suggested that two "résumés" of every new book printed in Spain should be made by the royal librarian and sent to "las Academias de Paris y de Trévoux," in whose official organs no Spanish works were ever reviewed. The editors of these publications gave as an explanation of their apparent indifference, that they never had received literary communications from Madrid, whereas they were kept informed about the literary life of practically every other important capital of Europe. One Don Juan de Ferreras, whose official position we have not been able to discover, consulted on this point, replied that such an undertaking was useless, as Spanish books of the day contained neither inventions nor discoveries of any kind. As a matter of fact, abstracts had been sent to the Jesuit fathers and they had only published the titles of a few, "porque su instituto era informar á la Europa de los adelantamientos en las Artes y Ciencias y no habiendo novedad considerable en los libros que se imprimen en España no han querido hacer memoria de ellos." [64]

This attempt to bring contemporary Spanish works within the range of the intellectual life of Europe had failed in a humiliating way. The idea does not seem to have been taken up again. The attempt made by Salafranca in 1736 was not of the same type. His "Memorias Eruditas para la Crítica de Artes y Ciencias . . . para mostrar á nuestros Patricios los progressos de la Literatura Estrangera . . ." had they been pub-

[64] Diario, v. VII. Prologue. No pagination, 4th leaflet.

lished would have aimed, as the title indicates, to bring matter for study and comparison within the grasp of Spanish readers.[65]

The purpose of the "Diario de los Literatos" was a bolder one than that which was at the foundation of the two schemes which we have just mentioned. It was designed to pass an impartial judgment on all new books published in Spain.

The newly born periodical was dedicated to Philippe V himself. The protection of the monarch was asked on the grounds that the "Diario" was a manifestation of the same movement which had brought about the foundation of the School for Noblemen's Sons and that of the Royal Library, together with the restoration of the Medical Society of Seville, the establishment of the Spanish Academy and of the University of Cervera. The end of the dedication might well have aroused the prejudices and increased the suspicions of the "castellanos viejos" for it contained a praise of Louis XIV, whose incomparable virtues were shown to have taken as their present place of abode the heroic bosom of Philip V "para gloria y felicidad de las Españas." [66]

As is the case with nearly all the other neo-classic documents, the "Diario" has an introduction to its first volume which attempts to establish on logical grounds the cause for its existence. The human mind has a craving for universal knowledge, but its powers of acquisition are limited. The thinkers of the seventeenth century "invented" periodicals with a view to supplying this infirmity of the human mind by presenting knowledge in the most compact form, for "si vivimos por compendio tambien por compendio debemos ser instruidos." [67]

The Avowed Policy of the Diario.—The editors of the Diario announced that they would be guided in their policy by the "Journal de Trévoux," a periodical which, because of the thoroughness and variety of its reviews as well as the courteous tones of its criticisms, was superior to any other publication dealing with contemporary literature.

The consistently courteous tone of the Jesuit fathers had made a deep impression on the editors of the "Diario" for they refer to it again in the pages where they protest that, if their natural prudence should fail to make them just in all cases, "el ejemplo de los Estranjeros que con la equidad y moderación han hecho bien quistos sus jornales, nos hubiera guiado al grado conveniente para el principio y continuación de este Diario." *

We shall see farther on in this study that the repeated attacks on the

[65] Diario, v. I. Introduction.
[66] Diario, v. I. Dedication.
[67] Diario, v. I. Introduction.

'Diario" by those Spaniards who refused to see room for improvement in any phase of Spanish life were to embitter the editors to the extent of making them lose sight of their ideal. Their judgments, persistently misinterpreted by chauvinistic readers, were to grow less and less serene while the self-control which they still retained in critical matters was more than compensated for by the virulent and pugnacious tone of the prologues introducing the later volumes of essays.

Before studying more in detail the evolution which the naturally equable temper of the "Diaristas" underwent through the stormy life of their periodical, let us gain a better idea of its aim and of its spirit by studying a few of the reviews which appeared on its pages.

The editors had in mind to attack those books which did more harm than good by helping to perpetuate among Spaniards the love of certain defects typical of their race, these defects being "el espíritu cavalleresco, puntualidades ridículas en el trato civil y . . . las costumbres cómicas amatorias que aún se conservan en nuestra España, demanadas de la frequente lección de los libros de Caballeriás, de Novelas y de Comedias de amores que por lo arduo y lo maravilloso fueron las delicias de los siglos pasados." [68]

This quotation would prove amply the close intellectual affiliation which linked Luzán with the editors and collaborators of the "Diario." The study of the most typical essays will only strengthen this proof.

Typical Reviews.—Two reviews of Comedias are of interest to us. The first passes judgment on Alarcon's "La Crueldad por el Honor," of which an edition was given out in 1737. The most classical, in the French sense, of the Spanish dramatists meets in this work only with lukewarm approbation on the part of the reviewers. The subject is more tragic than comic. The plot based on the attempt on the part of an impostor to impersonate Alfonso I is, to be sure, historically true, but is such as to appeal to a nation more fond of the marvelous than of the probable. As for the lines, they contain much delightful wit though there are times when they run into stylistic excesses.*

"La Tortura de la Iglesia" by Thomas de Añorbe y Corregel is treated not simply with coldness but with severity. The subject, a sacred one, is of such a nature that the three unities cannot possibly be applied without bringing Sacred History into conflict with the Doctrines of the Church and the actions require such elaborate stage settings that the reviewer exclaims ironically: "No dejamos de considerar quan felicísimo será el siglo en que se halle persona que pueda administrar tantos materiales necessarios por las tramoyas y adornos escénicos, que se necesitan para

[68] Diario, v. I. Introduction.

su execución en lo que manifiesta nuestro Autor lo fecundo y magnánimo de su fantasía . . ." [69]

The review ends with this remark strongly tinged with disdain: "Las personas que no gustan de poesías profanas ni de saber el Arte Cómico, hallarán en su lección un entretemiento apacible y provechoso."

We notice in these two reviews a growing unwillingness to account brilliancy and wit sufficient compensation for extravagance in plot. The same attitude denoting hostility towards free fancy finds a voice elsewhere than in the criticism of "comedias." Speaking of the prose of Villaroel, we are told that it constitutes a mighty exorcism against the demon of melancholia but that its wit is too biting—"también se desazonan los manjares por abundancia de sal que en siendo mucho muerde y no sazona." [70]

The Reviews by Hervás.—The majority of the reviews are not signed. The principles governing the criticism of these essays are so consistently the same and their style has so few distinguishing features that it would be a very difficult task to determine which came from the same pen. The articles bearing the signature or the pseudonyms of Don Gerardo de Hervás stand alone in this respect. From the first lines, the reader is captivated by the dash and brilliancy of the style, while the keenness of the argument and the truly Spanish excellence of the wit displayed command his attention to the very last. So original is the style of that author that his signing at times "Jorge Pitillas" and at others "Don Hugo Herrera de Jaspedós" deceives no one. A glance at the essay is sufficient to remove all doubts as to the identity of the author.*

There are three essays by Hervás in the complete collection of the "Diario."

To the reader who has been compelled to plough through the earnest but rather leaden material which has been the subject of our discussion up to this point, the meeting with these vigorous and picturesque essays has the resuscitating effect of a spring of living waters discovered at high noon by a tired wayfarer.

The most delightful irony pervades the prose as well as the verse of José Gerardo de Hervás. It is in the fifth volume of the "Diario" that we find the first of these essays. In a previous issue, the "Diario" had attacked and handled pretty severely one Don Pedro Nolasco de Ozejo who had published a book on the life of St. Anthony bearing the following title: "El Sol de los Anagoretas, La Luz de Egypto, el Pasmo de la Tabayda, el Asombro del Mondo, el Portento de la Grecia, la Milagrosa Vida de San Antonio Abad puesta en octavas por D. P. N." *

[69] Diario, v. IV, p. 360.
[70] Diario, v. II, art. 20.

This title tells us that the poem contained the strange mixture of miracles, dogma and mystic theorizing typical of so many of the well meaning but quite absurd books of a devotional character which came to light so often during the years when Spanish literature was at its lowest ebb. The "Diario" had made an analysis of this work and treated it contemptuously. The author had published a sharp reply and Hervás, to continue the work begun by the first article on the matter, wrote out an elaborate mock defense of the work and of its author. In it he gently chided the editors of the "Diario," saying of them "lo que uno de nuestros mejores cómicos tenía á las mujeres de quienes dijo que eran diablos de poco arrepentimiento." *

His method of apparently dismissing the charge of rudeness which had been brought up against Don Pedro because of his acrid rejoinder would lose its savor if translated. For this reason we quote it in full. Speaking of the presence or absence of courtesy in a person's make-up he says: "como si esto de la cortesía estuviesse en manos de un Christiano y no fuese cosa que Dios la da y Dios la quita. Esto, señores mios, va en ingenios y si Don Pedro no le tiene de ser cortés, nadie puede formar queja de lo que el otro no puede remediar; y mucho menos Vds. pues no les llamo Garrachones, que segun tengo noticia es el dicterio más de la moda en essa corte." [71]

Another essay of Hervás is the one in which he tears to pieces the preface or rather the dedication of a book entitled "Rasgo Epico" written by one D. Joachin Casses.*

We are introduced to the literary lights of the home town of the author who signs D. Hugo Herrera de Jaspedós. The attorney, the barber and the physician meet at the house of that gentleman who reports to us their lively conversation in the course of which we learn that the preface in question is pilfered partly from the "Mercure Littéraire" and partly from Ozejo's "Vida de San Antoño Abad."

This piece of work, however, is less vivacious than the one which we have just discussed and it is decidedly inferior to what is the author's masterpiece, namely, his "Satire against the bad writers of the day."

As Hervás was not officially one of the editors of the "Diario," a letter asks the hospitality of the review for his satire and explains briefly the reasons which impelled the author to compose it.[72] It is his habit to read all new books as they come out and he is thirsting for revenge because of "los repetidos chascos, que en el gusto y en la bolsa me ha acarreado esta imprudente curiosidad." He chooses the "Diario" as his agent because

[71] Diario, v. V, p. 29.
[72] Diario, v. VII, pp. 194 ff.

in his experience with contemporary writings those appearing in that review, though not perfect by any means, at least, are never very bad.

He will try to be guided by reason and by Christian principles but he does not mean to claim that his criticism will be always just nor in any way final. "Fuera de que, lo que yo digo, no es ninguna decision Rotal ni el Evangelio de San Marco." [73]

The satire "Contra los malos escritores de su tiempo" is too well known to be treated in the detailed way which less accessible writings require. In it there is no attempt at a classification of literary genres nor any didactic enumeration of rules. It is a general discharge of witty indignation against bad taste and bad writers. The comical violence of its style can best be judged from a few quotations. The very first lines of the poem plunge us in "medias res."

"No más no más callar, ya es impossible:
¡Alla voy! no me tengan: ¡Fuera! digo,
Que se desata mi maldita horrible.
No censures mi intento ¡o Lelio amigo!
Pues sabes cuánto tiempo he contrastado
El fatal movimiento, que ahora sigo.
Ya toda mi cordura se ha acabado:
Ya llegó la paciencia al postrer punto,
Y la atacada mina se ha volado."

With sustained vim he attacks plagiarists, ridicules the perpetrators of flat-footed or altisonant dedications. He heaps abuse on those guilty of using Gallicisms as well as on those who mar the natural beauty of their mother tongue by means of far-fetched figures, exaggerated terms, wilful obscurity or any other form of literary unreason.

"Déjame lamentar el desvarío
De que nuestra gran lengua esté abatida
Siendo de la eloquencia el mayor río."

The subject matter of the satire contains no original views on criticism. As a matter of fact, Cueto has proved conclusively that the ideas expressed were those of Boileau.* Often he follows his model so closely that resemblance to the "Art Poétique" forces itself on the reader, as for instance in the line:

"La vista de un mal libro me es terrible,"

or, when he admits his inability to temporize:

"Conozco que el fingir me aflige y daña:
Y así á lo blanco siempre llamé blanco
Y á Mañer le llamé siempre alimaña."

[73] Diario, v. VII, p. 199.

This poem illustrates the possibility of perfect literary assimilation. Though the ideas are Boileau's and for that reason generally foreign to the Spanish turn of mind, the style which clothes them is typical of the purest, the best of the Spanish satirical verse. For that reason and granting Sainte-Beuve's claim, that style alone is immortal, the satire of Hervás is as completely original a piece of writing as can be the pride of any nation.*

Reasons Actually Underlying the Founding of the Diario.—With the last volumes of the "Diario" we begin to have tangible proof of the deeper reasons which brought about this whole critical revival of which Luzán and the collaborators of the "Diario" were the official leaders. As we have already said, when treating of the share of Feijóo in this neo-classic movement, there had been, from the beginning of the century, a steady influx of French ideas into Spain.

There was nothing forced in that invasion. Frenchmen had no active part in it, but Spaniards of the educated class, finding no suitable reading matter in the home production, turned more and more to foreign books.

As a result these readers could not but make the most depressing comparisons between the contemporary literature of their country and that of its neighbors, more particularly of course that of France, which enjoyed then the respect of all nations in intellectual matters.

Luzán had already expressed his sorrow at having to admit the inferiority of his nation in the literary world of the day.

This feeling of shame recurred with increasing frequency in the "Diario," and also with increasing intensity; not that it actually was more intense at one time than at another but the leaders of the movement, in proportion as the fight waxed hot, became less and less able to hide the real state of their feelings in the matter.

The Rev. Fr. Jacinto Loaisa had discovered that a historical work purporting to be original with Mañer was merely a garbled copy of a French account of the events following the peace of Riswick.

Before tearing the plagiarized work to pieces, the critic feels called upon to give a reason which will explain his going to so much trouble to destroy a man's literary reputation. He explains that he has no personal animosity against the writer, but that for a long time he has been ashamed to see in what a state of inferiority Spain stood when compared with other nations. He has been able to gain this new and unpleasant perspective through the reading of books loaned him by foreigners. Possessed of this knowledge, he feels that it is his imperative duty to do his share in fighting the ignorance and the charlatanism which are disgracing his country.*

The editors of the "Diario," under the stress of the struggle, grow

more and more outspoken, and to make their position perfectly clear, they give a sketch of their intellectual evolution.

From it we learn that these gentlemen went through the regular course of study which awaited in those days the youths of Spain and that, as a result of this training, they became possessed of the usual baggage belonging to educated men of the middle class, this baggage including a scorn for things foreign—"y pensábamos bajamente de los Estrangeros." *

But these future journalists were less easily satisfied than the average youths of their land, and they continued their education by dabbling in languages as well as in arts and sciences not directly connected with their regular occupation.

Then it was that the inadequacy of their early training became apparent to them. Grieved by the realization of the extent to which their faulty training had harmed them, they became filled with a generous desire to increase their fund of information and to warn others against a system of ideas and ideals which were bound to harm those who in good faith entrusted to them their intellectual development.

Unfavorable comparison of Spanish intellectual development with that of their more favored neighbors was by this prologue frankly admitted to be the origin of the "Diario." This was a very dangerous admission for the "Diaristas" to make. To be sure, a discreet reader might have guessed as much from the character of the majority of the essays published up to the time of that preface, but what is only guessed at can always be explained away and, at any rate, it does not call for an immediate rejoinder. The unabashed statement of the "Diaristas" which we have just reported left no room for diplomacy or for compromise. As a result many of its friends became lukewarm. . Those who already had declared war on the review increased their effort and, in course of time, brought about the downfall of the "Diario," in spite of the protection granted by the King himself.

The Evolution of the Tone of the Diario.—The spread of this hostility can be traced to the prologues which the "Diaristas" found themselves compelled to prefix to their later volumes in order to explain their position and to repeat that their purpose was a patriotic one. We shall see that these prologues were not masterpieces of diplomacy. Their increasing violence is a good indication of the way the fight grew more and more bitter.

We learn from the foreword to the fifth volume that friends of the review had discreetly urged its editors to soften the tone of their criticism. The reply of these gentlemen was blunt enough. They retorted that it was not possible to be patient with a horde of bad writers who

daily lowered the literary taste of their country and made it impossible for capable authors to be appreciated or even read.

These same friends, in their mild remonstrances, must have reminded the "Diaristas" of their promise to imitate the good fathers of Trévoux in amenity of tone as well as in judicial wisdom. The answer which they received shows the complete change of heart which the reformers had undergone. Two years before, they had made that promise in good faith; we know that, at that time, they had chided Luzán for what they called the excessive heat of his judgments. And yet no more bitter arraignment against the Spanish writers of the early eighteenth century can be found than the one contained in the answer made to the aforementioned request of the "Diario's" prudent friends. This is, in full, the defense of the "Diaristas": "Y si alguno quiere objetarnos que en otros Reynos se hacen los Diarios con mas templanza, le respondemos que ni ha reflexionado sobre la calidad de los Libros Estranjeros ni sobre el valor y reputación de los nuestros. Los estrangeros, por lo común, están bien instruidos en los idiomas Latino y Griego, en la erudición antigua y moderna, evitan los más visibles defectos de estilo y de méthodo, y aspiran á discurrir con alguna novedad ó á tratar de un assunto con alguna nueva economía y utilidad: por lo que no necesitan sus Diaristas censurar tan asperamente como nosotros que encontramos muchos libros sin estilo, sin méthodo, sin invención, sin pensamientos sin inteligencia de lengua Latina, sin erudición, si no es la que copian de Autores vulgaríssimos, sin elección de Autores porque no los conocen y sin exactitud en la verdad, porque sin crítica no pueden tenerla: y assi aora créemos que tienen razón los que dicen que no debemos censurarlos; porque baste decir que no son libros ni pueden serlo; y si algún nombre puede ponérselos es de 'Molas' literarias, informes, é inútiles por defecto de actividad intellectual."

This tirade, the reader should bear in mind, was a reply to a request for moderation made by friends.

It is so bitter that when we chance to find a prologue directed at an enemy we do not meet with more intense expressions of heat and scorn.

The prologue of the sixth volume of the "Diario" is directed against a priest who, on the occasion of the first suspension of the "Diario," had exclaimed "Bendito sea Díos que ya se acabaron estos hombres!"

After thanking the King for having resuscitated the "Diario," the prologue to the volume published in 1740 heaps up personal abuse on the unfortunate priest, then develops the meaning of his ill advised exclamation as follows:

Bendito sea Díos que todos los ignorantes y bárbaros podrán escrivir lo que se les antojare.

Bendito sea Díos que todo ocioso podrá sin trabajo ni verguenza trasladar y robar los escritos agenos sin elección orden ó fidelidad.

Bendito sea Díos que con títulos embusteros se robará el dinero ó los efectos á las letras; y escarmentados de los malos libros, no comprarán los buenos ni se compran.

Bendito sea Díos que el honor de las letras de España permanecerá despreciado de los sabios Estrangeros.

Bendito sea Díos que las fábulas, y mentiras passarán por las más averiguadas verdades.

Bendito sea Díos que las péssimas costumbres podrán aumentar su perdición con la propagación de los Libros malos.

Bendito sea Dios que los sabios callarán de verguenza de los ignorantes y estos parecerán sabios y robarán el premio de los sabios.

It is a far cry from this diatribe to the courtesy and "ton de bonne compagnie" of the good fathers of Trévoux. It is almost equally removed from the even tenor of Luzán's arguments. The "Diaristas" have lost their temper, for good and all. Exasperated by the stupidity of some and by the shallow impertinence of others, they have completely forgotten their lofty ideals of literary amenity and their language is as violent as that of their enemies.

The Result of That Evolution.—This outburst of passion was to influence most profoundly the whole of the neo-classic movement. Up to the time when the "Diaristas" first ran amuck dispensing insults and invectives to all comers, the neo-classic movement had based all its arguments on logic, on Aristotle, or simply on appeals to common sense. They stated that Spain would be better off if this or that matter were altered or introduced. To be sure, the beginning of wisdom with the leaders of the reform movement had arisen from the comparison of Spain's lamentable state with that of its enlightened neighbors, but the leaders had said little about the source of their ideas. The "Diaristas," carried off their feet by the increasing excitement of the struggle, at last flung the supposed shame of Spain in the very teeth of all Spaniards.

From that moment, the neo-classic movement lost absolutely whatever small chance it had had of ever becoming a national movement in the real sense of the word. From that moment it became an alien thing, hated instinctively by those who had no taste for abstract truth or rather by those whose education did not enable them to grasp abstract truth. The learned and those who flattered themselves that they were citizens of the world might uphold the movement and continue to see its great possibilities, wishing dearly that Spain might benefit by it. It was never-

theless doomed to remain an aristocratic movement, forever held in suspicion by the intellectual "tiers état" of the Peninsula. The fact that it had risen directly through the effort of patriotic Spaniards and that Spaniards, patriotic in a broad sense, were helping in its development did not save it from being classified once for all with that vague invasion of French things, which, real or imaginary, haunted the minds of the middle and lower classes of Spanish society throughout the eighteenth century.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III.

P. 49. The bound volumes of the "Diario" bear the dates 1737 for v. I and 1741 for v. VII.

P. 50. v. I. Introduction. Also in the same: "Siguiéronse á estos jornales las Memorias de Trévoux que comenzaron con el siglo presente empleándose en ellas con manifiestas ventajas á todos los demás jornalistas, los Padres de la Compañía de Jesús como se demuestra en lo selecto de las Obras que extractan, en la exactitud y extension de los Extractos en la equidad con que critican los libros y en el urbano artificio con que dan a conocer los defectos de algunos escritores: circumstancias que no se hallen juntas en ninguna otra compañía de jornalistas."

P. 51. Diario, v. I, 4th article. La graciosidad es aguda y sazonada aunque tal vez excede los límites de su caracter, p. 81.

P. 52. Cueto, Historia Crítica, etc., v. I, ch. vi. Speaks of the problem concerning the identity of Hervás. The editors of the "Diario" gave no clue as to this, probably to spare their friend the attacks sure to deluge a successful defender of good taste. p. 194. On page 198, Cueto cites a letter of Hervás himself to his cousin Cobo de la Torre, in which he seems to refer to himself as the author of the satire—"todo está revelando á las clares que Hervás y Pitillas son una misma é idéntica persona." Pellicer in his article on the actress Petronila Xibaja says in so many words that Pitillas and Jaspedós are no other than Hervás. A letter from (p. 200) Puig seems to indicate that Hervás was either a cleric or a lawyer. He died in 1742. The satire was probably written in 1741.

P. 52. Cadalso had such books in mind when he wrote the following lines in his "Cartas Marruecas," Carta 77, p. 311: "Algunos ingenios mueren todavía, digámoslo así, de la misma peste de que pocos escaparon entonces. Varios oradores y poetas de estos días parece que no son sino sombras ó almas de los que murieron cien años he . . . esta es suma verdad . . . pero con particularidad en los títulos de libros, papeles y comedias. Aquí tengo una lista de obras que han salido al publico con toda solemnidad de veinte años á esta parte, haciendo poco honor á nuestra literatura." Cites "Los zelos hacen estrellas y el amor hace prodigios." "Zumba de pronósticos y pronósticos de Zumba." "Eternidad de diversas eternidades." These were published after 1757.

P. 53. Diario, v. V., art. 1. Carta de Don Hugo Herrera de Jaspedós escrita á los Autores del Diario. P. 29 for quotation.

P. 54. Diario, v. VII, art. 15. Carta de Don Hugo de Herrera de Jaspedós á los Autores del Diario sobre el Rasgo Epico del Doctor D. Joachin Casses.

P. 54. Cueto. Historia crítica de la Poesia Castellena en el siglo XVIII., v. I, ch. vi. Cueto remarks on the fact that many critics, including Ticknor, saw only classical references or sources in the work signed Jorge Pitillas. This is due to the fact that many lines from Juvenal and Perseus are recognizable through the Castilian of the Satire and that the author always referred such to the Latin author whom they resemble. This was only a literary trick, says Cueto, p. 191. "El author, que estaba completamente familiarizado con las sátiras de Boileau, en cuya doctrina habia bebido real y verdaderamente toda su inspiración, no cita una sola vez al eminente escritor francés, y, en cambio no omite, en las notas, uno sólo de los pasajes de los poetas de la antiguedad, en donde quiere aparentar haber encontrado las ideas cardinales de la sátira." Cueto proceeds to prove that Pitillas did not take his ideas only from the Satires of Boileau and the Art Poétique but also from his didactic prose works. Parallel passages from Boileau and from the Satire make the case perfectly clear, pp. 192-93.

P. 55. Menéndez y Pelayo, Idéas Estéticas, v. V, p. 156. . . . "como si Hervás y Boileau hubiesen pensado las mismas cosas en el mismo punto y cada cual según el genio de su lengua nativa."

P. 55. Vol. VII, art. 2. Criticism of Mañer's "Compendio Chronológico de la Historia de este siglo." "Muchos días ha estoy muy quejoso de las costumbres de este siglo en España, debiendo el conocimiento de ellas á algunos Libros que me prestan los Estrangeros que me conocen aficionado."

P. 56. Diario, v. VI. Prologue 41. "En las mismas Escuelas nos educamos que todos nuestros Patricios y de ellos salimos casi con las mismas aprehensiones ó preoccupaciones; de suerte que nos interessábamos como todos en la estimación de nuestras costumbres Españolas literarias, nos dejábamos ocupar de la admiración de nuestros escritores ó leímos qualquier libro como necesario para nuestra enseñanza y pensábamos bajamente de los Estranjeros: pero deseosos de informarnos de todo comenzamos á leer los Autores modernos . . . y á esto se siguió el conocer la infelicidad de nuestra crianza y la perdición de quantos nos imitan en ella. Con este conocimiento, lastimados del daño propio y ageno, propusimos aplicar nuestras fuerzas á desengañan nuestros patricios por medio de esta 'Invención' que governada con mayor fortuna entre los extrangeros, no ha dejado de ser perseguida con sátiras y otras hostilidades como saben los Eruditos."

CHAPTER IV.

An Organized Group of Neo-Classicists. The Academy "Del Buen Gusto."

The failure of the "Diario" to spread neo-classicism broadcast throughout Spanish society tended, as we have seen, to make a sharp line of cleavage between the supporters of the new doctrines and those of the so-called national ideals.

As the former were greatly outnumbered by the latter, it is not to be wondered at, that, adopting the usual policy of minorities, they strove to unite into compact groups.

The premature movement of popularization started by the Diario had failed but it had rendered a service to the cause it advocated by proving that neo-classicism could develop only as a slow growth, fostered by the careful studies of a few chosen men, whose influence could in turn affect the more literary classes of Spain. The guidance that the leaders of such groups would need could be found most easily of course in the "Arte Poética" of Luzán. Thus what we called the spontaneous manifestation of the neo-classic movement died out because of its untimely radicalism while the thought of Luzán, more serene if not less extreme, became the "vade mecum" of those leaders whose "entourage" favored the introduction of principles of discipline into Spanish literature.

The "Academia del Buen Gusto" is the first in importance as well as in point of time of these associations of literary reformers. We may then give the year 1749 as the date at which the neo-classic movement passed from its preliminary stage of individual endeavor to that of a systematic and concrete action.

A number of so-called "academies" based on Italian models had existed in Spain during the latter part of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth. Their aim had been of course to foster the national or Gongoristic school of poetry.[74]

Along with the decadence of letters at the end of the seventeenth century and during the first years of the eighteenth, interest in such organizations had waned. The "Academia Matritense," of which Cañizares and Benegasi were members, lasted but a short time during the reign of Philip V. As can be inferred from the authors just mentioned,

[74] Cueto. B. A. E., pp. lxxxvi-lxxxvii.

it brought together a group of men whose ideals were uncompromisingly in favor of the old school of Castilian poetry.[75]

The Academy of Good Taste, organized as we have said in 1749, was fundamentally different from its predecessors, though it retained some points in common with them. The circumstances of its foundation gave it the character of a French salon and the resemblance of this literary body to the group of wits, scholars and noblemen who gathered about the Marquise de Rambouillet almost forces itself on the mind.

The wealthy Countess of Lemos who, to the prestige due to her rank, added the charms of a cultured mind and much personal grace, gathered about her the men of talent and refinement of the day.[76] Neo-classicism, which in all countries had thrived best in the studies of scholars or amid the refined surroundings of social life, found in the drawing-rooms of the countess the kind of atmosphere which its nature needed most. The spirit of courtesy and self-restraint which pervaded the social atmosphere of a drawing-room given to ideals of French amenity afforded exactly the kind of protection which the new theories needed. This hot-house atmosphere, with its courteous discussions, its respect for rationality and its ideals of simplicity in style and thought, was to give the frail plant of neo-classicism a chance for life, and bring about a time when it would be strong enough to bear transplantation to a less favorable soil where, nevertheless, it was to become tenaciously rooted.*

It would be a mistake to describe the Academy of Good Taste as a solid body of neo-classicists. Pedants or scholars such as Velázquez, Nasarre and Montiano did give the meetings the character which belonged to their turn of mind, but this heavy if well meaning influence was strangely modified by the presence of many noblemen of high rank and by poets such as Porcel, Torrepalma and Villaroel.

Porcel.—The first mentioned of these poets, Porcel, was quite typical of a kind of mental attitude resulting from the unsettled conditions of thought at that time. As a logician and as a man of sense he was quite convinced of the excellence of the reform which was being started, but his intuition, his heart, his enthusiasm were still firm believers in the ideals of the old national school.

In a way different from that of the Romanticists, his head and his heart were at odds with each other and whenever the former had made a clear statement of its creed the latter would reply in defiance with a burst of Gongoric verse. From this state of affairs it was easy for the poet to grow into an ironical way of judging his own work and Porcel indeed often hides the insecurity of his position by pleasantly laughing

[75] Cueto. B. A. E., p. lxxxviii.
[76] Cueto. B. A. E., v. LXI, p. lxxxix.

at himself. This translator of Boileau's "Lutrin," [77] under the fiction of a conclave of old Spanish poets gathered on Parnassus, has given us in just such an ironical spirit his opinion of his own poem, the "hunting eclogue," entitled the Adonis.*

By a speech put in the mouth of Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola and addressed to Lope, Garcilaso and Rengifo, he roundly condemns his own work, which is in its very title a contradiction in terms. An eclogue means peace, quiet and song; hunting lends itself to none of these. As a matter of fact, this hunting eclogue talks about hunting but gives no hunting scenes at all. Whichever way one may look at that poem it appears as a monster having no place in any neo-classic system of classification. "¿Cuántas cosas quiere que sea este parto que no lo acabamos de fijar en especie alguna del mundo poético?" What good can be derived from its supposed moral, that "Love in a forest can never bring happiness"?—"hermoso título para una comedia de las muchas que hoy nos refieren que ocupan lastimosamente los teatros."

The neo-classic critic has passed judgment and there is not much left to admire in the hunting eclogue. Thus Porcel the neo-classicist deplores the badness of his ways but in the introduction written later, when it became necessary to print the whole work to forestall unauthorized editions, Porcel, the descendant of the brilliant school of the seventeenth century, while repeating the self-condemnation just reported, adds—"as to style, what if it is lofty, for hunters are princes and kings; what if the nymphs are rather learned, does not Góngora say 'Culta sí aunque bucólica Talía'?" And the poet admits frankly that he has aimed to copy Góngora in his diction, "Góngora delicia de los entendimientos no vulgares de quien te confiesco (lector) hallarás algunos rasgos de luz que ilustren las sombras de mi poema." [78] Then, as if stricken with remorse at this outburst of poetical lawlessness, he adds with considerable solemnity that the poem, though composed of four loosely bound ecologues, does possess an element of unity since all four of the poems tend to prove—"Que no hay amor en las selvas sin ventura." [79]

Thus Luzán and Góngora in turn control the pen of this versatile disciple of the neo-classicists but these changes, as we have already remarked, are usually presided over by a spirit of playful irony. In one place Porcel has given us his true attitude towards literary criticism and it is a sane compromise, very similar to the well balanced views of Feijóo in such matters. In the presence of Velázquez, Nasarra and Montiano, Porcel was not afraid of reading the following speech put by him into the

[77] Cueto. B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 137.
[78] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 140.
[79] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 140.

mouth of Garcilaso de la Vega. "Confirmo el juicio que entre los mortales hice que la poética no es más que opinión. Le poesía es genial y á excepción de algunas reglas generales y de la sindéresis universal que tiene todo hombre sensato, el poeta no debe adoptar otra ley que la de su genio. Se ha de precipitar como libre el espíritu de los poetas; por eso nos pintan al Pegaso con alas y no freno; y si éste se le pone como intenta el que modernamente ha erigido el Parnaso francés, es desatino . . . En vano se cansan los maestros del arte en señalar estas ni las otras particulares reglas, porque esto no es otra cosa que tiranizar el libre pensar del hombre que en cada uno se diferencia, según la fuerza de su genio, el valor de su idioma, la doctrina en que desde sus primeros años lo impusieron, las pasiones que lo dominan y otras muchas cosas." [80]

Villaroel.—Villaroel was a very different person from Porcel. His presence in the Academy was as incongruous as would have been that of Cañízares himself.

He wrote verse with facility and indulged freely in the Gongoristic style. Cueto found the following lines composed by Villaroel on the occasion of a play given at the house of the countess and in which she herself had taken a part:

Excelentísima siempre
Y dulcísima señora,
Que por tan dulce es milagro
Que los pajes no te coman . . .
¿Qué diré de tu comedia?
Pues hasta que tu persona
En ella se presentó
No era comedia famosa . . .
Zamora que de Diós goce
Ó que ya á este tiempo goza
Al verte á tí en su comedia
Diriá: ("Solo esto es gloria" . . .)

Saliste, pues, al tablado
Y luego que el pié lo toca
Le salieron de vergüenza
Los colores al alfombra
Mas ¿qué mucho, si traías,
Noblemente fanfarrona,
Por manos dos azucenas
Y por ojos dos antorchas?
A mí me pareció que era
A un tiempo tu voz sonora
Archilaud, arpa, clave
Violín, cítara y tiorba . . .[81]

[80] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. ci.
[81] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. xci.

Lines of this type show clearly enough why Cueto considered Villaroel one of those poets who were not amenable to neo-classic discipline, but his vivacity and his good nature caused the serious members of the Academy to forgive him his many sins against Aristotle and the rules.

A sterner side of this man's nature is shown by his dislike of the French, as illustrated by some lines he wrote to the Marquis of Enseñada, minister of Ferdinand VI, and which Cueto gives us in the ninth chapter (B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 94) of the Bosquejo:

Castellana es esta musa
Y mucho más le valiera
Que ser musa castellana
Ser una musa francesa;
Pues dicen que nada es bueno
Como de París no sea;
Y hasta la misma herejía
Si es de París será acepta.
¿Cuándo ha de llegar el día
Incauta España, en que entiendas
Que aun afilan contra tí
Los cuchillos en tus piedras?
¿Cuándo has de desengañarte
De que, astuta, Francia intenta
Introducirte los "usos"
Para ponerte las "ruecas"? [82]

His qualities as well as his faults made Villaroel unfit to sympathize with the ideas of the more important members of the Academy and the fact that he was a welcome guest is a fine testimonial to the broad-mindedness of this little group of scholars and noblemen who listened with undisturbed affability to a play by Zamora, to Gongoristic verse or to heavy discussions on neo-classic subjects.

Torrepalma.—Castillejo y Verdujo, Count of Torrepalma, was probably nearer to the spirit of the critics, strictly speaking, than the two men we have been writing about. Cueto finds in him a great power for descriptions of mighty subjects or stupendous actions but admits that he lacked true geniality and that the qualities of his heart were hidden by his infatuation for decorum and obscurity. Among the Academicians he was known as "El Difícil" and the first lines of the piece of poetry he wrote on the occasion of his reception among the members of the Academy show only too well how much he deserved this forbidding title:

Cascado abete, del sagrado mirto
Donde mi olvido te dejó pendiente
(Voto no ya del triunfo de mi canto,

[82] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. xciv.

Despojo de ocio inculto sí) desciende.
Vuelva á pulsar la mano del sonoro
Leño las dulces cuerdas, si consiente
El polvo antiguo que al rozar el plectro
Las primitivas cláusulas encuentre.[83]

The rest of the poem continues solemn and full of cultured obscurity lavishing academic and Gongoristic praise on the high deity to whom the Muses owe their renewed life. No matter what Torrepalma's attitude may have been toward the other neo-classic rules he must have been willing to accept and to preach the doctrine of decorum even in its most extreme form.*

Montiano.—Outside of Luzán, the best known critics of the Academy were Montiano, Velázquez and Nasarre, this last mentioned author being recognized perhaps as the weakest of the three. However this may be, none of this group except Luzán did as much as Montiano to spread the spirit of the rule-loving party. He was a scholarly man, a member of both royal academies and a faithful servant of the King in the capacity of secretary of state. The salient points in the man's character were the clearness of his judgment, his intensely patriotic attitude and his lack of esthetic sense. The tone of his prose is always that of a strong man, clear-headed and bold without arrogance. The principle which he put forward in all his literary controversies was that Spain was being looked down upon by foreigners because of the folly of its writers and that it must be rescued from its debased condition. Montiano is one of the many patriotic Spaniards who were wounded to the quick by these scornful lines of Boileau's "Art Poétique":

Un rimeur sans péril, delà les Pyrenées,
Sur la scène en un jour rassemble des années:
Là souvent le héros d'un spectacle grossier,
Enfant au premier acte est barbon au dernier;[84]

and, if it is impossible not to admit the very decided limitations of Montiano's mind along artistic lines, it is equally impossible not to respect the man for his manly and patriotic attitude throughout the literary struggle of his day.

Montiano's great contribution to the cause he upheld is of course his two tragedies and the discourses which precede them.

Montiano wrote the plays entitled "Virginia" and "Athaulfo" with a pretty clear knowledge of his own limitations. There is something touching in the way this sturdy man exposed himself to criticism hoping

[83] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 128.
[84] Boileau, Art Poétique. Canto III, lines 39-42.

that, as a reward, authors better gifted than himself would follow his lead, improve upon him and by the creation of some regular tragedy of merit undermine the reasons on which hostile foreigners based their scorn for Spanish literature.

Montiano's First Discourse.—The first discourse and the tragedy entitled "Virginia" were published in 1751. Previous to their publication they had been read, discussed and approved by the Academy of Good Taste. We may well consider these writings of Montiano the official platform of the Academy.[85]

The purpose of Montiano in writing his essays was twofold. First he wished to prove to impertinent foreigners that from the standpoint of the neo-classicists the traditions and the history of the Spanish stage were not to be despised. Secondly he wanted to give his countrymen sound advice on playwriting and on the art of acting. Thus we find that, throughout, his attitude is judicial. He desires with equal ardor to make out the best case possible for the dignity of the stage of his nation and to combat the errors of his fellow citizens. His patriotic attitude won many to his cause. The "imprimatur" attached to the second edition remarks upon the service he was rendering his country. "El discurso (no solo) restituye á España las propias glorias de que la han querido despojar los Estraños quando la acusan de poco fecunda en hombres eruditos quizás por servirse de sus trabajos para erigirse los decantados trofeos de que tanto se envanecen." *

To serve as an outline to his discourse, he criticizes a work entitled "El Teatro Español," printed in Paris in 1738. He does not mention the name of this author from whom he takes the following quotation: * "Pour les tragédies les Espagnols n'en ont point car on ne saurait donner justement ce titre à quelques uns de leurs ouvrages qui le portent sans le mériter; telles sont la Celestine et l'Ingénieuse Hélène qui ne peuvent passer tout au plus que pour des Romans en Dialogues." [86] The comment of Montiano on this statement is that the author is badly informed. There have been regular tragedies in Spain and of the two works just mentioned one is a tragi-comedy and the other a "novela."

Montiano knew nothing of Juan del Encina, Gil Vicente, or Torres Naharro, or, if he did, they were not considered by him as belonging to the Spanish drama. He begins his disquisition on the existence of regular tragedies in Spain by mentioning the "Vergüenza de Agamemnon" and the "Hécuba Triste" of Pérez de Oliva. He calls them adaptations from Sophocles, whereas modern critics call them simple translations. These complete reworkings, he says, appeared before 1533 and show abso-

[85] Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. lxxxii.

[86] Discurso I, p. 6.

lute respect for the unities, admirable character portraiture and fine diction.[87]

Indeed the play known under the name of "Policiana, tragedia," which appeared in Toledo in 1547, by an unknown author,* because of its twenty acts and its nineteen actors deserves to be called a novel rather than a play. The French have a perfect right to criticize such productions but, as a matter of fact, there are other plays to be considered.[88] Such are the two "Nise" of Gerónimo Bermúdez whom Nicolás Antonio in his "Bibliotheca Hispana" knows only by the pseudonym of Silva. Nicolás Antonio believes that Bermúdez was posterior to Oliva, the translator of some plays of Sophocles. This error arose from the fact that the works of Oliva were printed after those of Bermúdez.[89] But to return to the main subject, Montiano agrees with Nasarre that Bermúdez observed the principal rules of the ancient drama, that the construction of the plot and qualities of the style were both admirable.[90]

From the tragedies of Juan de la Cueva, Montiano can derive but little comfort, for, if the tragedy entitled "Ruiz Velásquez" shows excellent diction, the unities are violated. The same is true of "La Muerte de Telamón" which in no way resembles the play of that name by Sophocles. "La muerte de Virginia" has two actions. As for the "Principe de Tyrano," if it possesses the unity of action, its plot does not even approach probability: it introduces ghosts, a feature which good Catholics must always look upon with the greatest suspicion when it is not sanctioned by the Church.[91]

After this statement, evidently inspired by readings from Feijóo, Montiano passes to Artieda. He had of course read nothing from that author, but he granted him a certificate of regularity and faithfulness to rules, basing his judgment on a passage from the sixth book of the Galatea where Cervantes speaks very flatteringly of the author in question, though his praise is very general and makes no reference to Aristotelian tenets.[92] Montiano makes further use of Cervantes as a critic by quoting the famous passage in the forty-eighth chapter of the Quijote, where three tragedies whose titles are not stated are greatly praised. There were good tragedies in plenty, concludes Montiano. We know now that Cervantes referred to three plays by Leonardo de Argensola and that at least one of them was so far removed from the neo-classic

[87] Discurso, p. 6.
[88] Discurso, p. 9.
[89] Discurso, pp. 10-14.
[90] Discurso, p. 17.
[91] Discurso, p. 21.
[92] Discurso, p. 24.

ideal as to contain a scene where the wicked queen bites off a part of her tongue to spit it into the face of her monstrous husband and that in the course of the action every person of the tragedy perishes, with the exception of a messenger. Possessed of this knowledge, it is difficult for us to feel confident that Cervantes praised the plays of Artieda because of their regularity in form and thought.[93]

Judging the plays of Virués, Montiano severely criticizes "La Gran Semíramis" which, to use his words, unites "lo peor de lo antiguo y de lo moderno." "La Cruel Casandra" respects the unities but it is spoiled by its large number of acts and scenes of wholesale slaughter. "Atila Furioso" is regular enough but love rules its plot and Montiano is rather glad to have to deplore this fault because it gives him the opportunity to quote from the discourse on ancient tragedy, printed in 1749 by Voltaire as a preface to "Semíramis." In it Voltaire condemned the prevalence of love plots in tragedies, since, to his mind, love ought to be reserved for comedy.

Montiano agrees heartily with a view which, as he remarks, brings no less than 388 French tragedies under suspicion of literary heresy, degrading them to the level of many Spanish plays.[94]

"La Infeliz Marcela" is rapidly condemned for its resemblance to a novel and Montiano at last is free to praise "La Elisa Dido," the one original Spanish play which he can bring forth as regular in every point. With that one play Montiano would dearly wish to wipe away any stigma of irregularity which poorly informed foreigners might attach to the fair name of the Spanish drama. "No puede leerse sin admiración ni con lastima que se aparte tanto de las reglas en otras quien tan puntualmente las supo guardar en esta," [95] for the "Elisa Dido" offers an elevating example in a new Dido bound to remain true to her lawful husband and to her city. The action lasts but three or four hours and takes place in the temple of Jupiter. The style is suitable and the passions are well expressed.

This review of the "Elisa Dido" of Virués and of its fictitious plot is the climax of Montiano's defense of the Spanish stage. There is little comfort to be derived from the plays of Christóbal de Mesa. "Pompeyo," in spite of a prologue full of promise, is absolutely irregular. "Estrañisima inconsequencia discurrir así y executar tan diversamente." [96] Lope's tragedies are all to be condemned. Of the six mentioned, only one, "El Castigo sin Venganza," shows any sign of unity, that of plot. Equally

[93] Ticknor. See note p. 147.
[94] Discurso, p. 49.
[95] Discurso, p. 43.
[96] Discurso, p. 46.

discouraging are the plays of Mexía de la Cerda, Hurtado Velarde, López de Zárate, and particularly discouraging are those of Thomás de Añorbe y Corragel whose "Paulino" and its prologue must be denounced—"porque no crean los ignorantes que son así . . . las tragedias de los Franceses que dice que imita." [97]

Montiano must have felt that on the whole this review of the dramatic history of his country did not carry with it the conviction that the neo-classic school had had in any sense a regular development in Spain.

This feeling of defect may be the cause of the nature of his last statement on this subject. In it he reminds us that his essay has been right along a refutation of the French work mentioned above. Leaving Añorbe, Montiano makes the statement that there are many plays in manuscript form which would tend to disprove further the initial statement of the French writer. However, since from the nature of the case it was impossible for that author to have known any of these manuscript works, he, Montiano, will not now speak about them or use them in any way to prove his thesis concerning the neo-classic stage in Spain.*

By these plays in manuscript form Montiano must have meant to refer to plays written according to Aristotelian rules by some of his associates of the Academy of Good Taste, plays doomed never to reach a wider circle than that of the salon which had fostered their creation. Had he had in his possession the manuscripts of regular plays by standard authors, he would surely have made use of them to strengthen his discourse, the weakness of which he fully realized. The end of his discourse admits frankly the scantiness of the result of his study. The period of the regular stage in Spain was indeed very short. The fact remains that it is a far cry from having lost the road to never having been on it at all. Let foreigners who undertake to pass judgment, do so conscientiously and only after due consideration of the facts involved.[98]

Montiano's Second Discourse.—In the essay preceding the "Athaulfo," Montiano takes up again this question of the antiquity of the regular stage in Spain. Further studies had brought him new facts and his patriotic pen brings them forward to vindicate the honor of his country. This renewed effort is made easy for him by the comforting knowledge that his previous discourse has been received favorably at home and abroad. "Entonces animado del celo conque busco en quantas ocasiones se me presentan las ventajas de mi patria me resolví á ofrecer segunda vez al Público otro discurso." [99]

[97] Discurso, p. 63.
[98] Discurso, p. 79.
[99] Discurso II, p. 6.

The first of his new set of discoveries is Vasco Díaz Tanco de Frejenal, who already in his youth had written three tragedies—"Absalom," "Amon" and "Saul." By middle life he had written a "Triunpho Natalicio Hispano" in honor of the birth of Philip II, that is for the year 1527. From this date it may well be supposed that he wrote the three plays above mentioned about 1502 or before and, if this were the case, then Frejenal would have ante-dated Trissino, whose "Sophonisba" was played only in 1520, and the Spanish classical stage, in spite of its slight array of plays, would be older than that of any other nation.[100]

Since Frejenal was a disciple of Naharro and since the Propaladia was already published in 1517, the chronological argument of Montiano is barely possible, but nothing is known of the plays enumerated save their names, and, since the explicit preface of Christóbal de Mesa proved to be such a poor indication of the contents of the play which it preceded, surely a judgment of three plays based only on the nature of their titles can not be taken seriously.

In naming Guillén de Castro, Cervantes, Salas Barbadillo, Gabriel Lasso, in reporting that "Juan de Malara assegura escribió la de Absalón" and, in remarking that Pinciano admits without surprise that he saw "la Ifigenia en el teatro de la Cruz," Montiano does not strengthen his thesis.[101]

His statement about the performance of Latin tragedies by the students of Jesuit schools is interesting. It evidently refers to performances of the type mentioned by Montaigne when he tells us that he played in one entitled "Caesar." Under such auspices Montiano tells us that in 1571 "El Martirio de San Lorenzo" was performed in honor of Philip II.[102]

With a mention of Boscari's translation from Euripedes and a statement to the effect that a large number of tragi-comedies could be made regular by very slight emendations Montiano ends his discourse on the Spanish Drama.[103] The reader is satisfied that Montiano with his limited knowledge of the Spanish drama has done whatever he could do to vindicate what he felt was the literary honor of his country.

The conclusion of this subject will now allow us to take up the theoretical discussions and the model plays which Montiano had prepared for the instruction of contemporary Spanish writers. To be perfectly logical we should go back to the second half of the first discourse and then take up the tragedy entitled "Virginia," only to return later to

[100] Discurso II, p. 8.
[101] Discurso II, p. 10.
[102] Discurso II, p. 11.
[103] Discurso II, pp. 14-17.

the second half of the second discourse and to "Athaulfo," the second tragedy. The nature of the end of that second discourse is such however that it will be more convenient to speak about it now.

It consists of a number of useful remarks criticizing some of the lacks and some of the abuses which interfered with the proper performance of plays in the first half of the eighteenth century.

With his usual need of a specific authority Montiano bases his discourse on the thirteenth letter of Pinciano's * "Philosophia Antigua," drawing information as well from Luzán's "Poética" and from his "Memorias Literarias de París," ch. 10-11.[104] Following such guidance, Montiano proceeds to preach verisimilitude and decorum in personal fitness and in the costumes of actors. He urges pastoral scenery for pastoral plays, fortifications for warlike performances, adding the further advice that demi-lunes and the Vauban style of fortifications can not serve as settings for plays supposed to take place in antiquity.[105] With such simple admonitions, which really sound too simple to be worth quoting at length, Montiano preaches the doctrine of local color.

We shall see later that, in "Virginia," Montiano had taken some liberties with the doctrine of the unity of place. In the discourse which we are considering he makes amends for this sin. He has come to the conclusion that only the strictest interpretation of the rule is to be countenanced.[106]

Passing condemnation on the "entremés" which intereferes with the unity of plot and on the prompter who is too much in evidence * and too noisy, Montiano advises that the number of supernumeraries to be shown on the stage be kept down to a reasonable figure.[107] Then he passes to the subject of acting and general bearing.

He gives very definite, too definite directions for the carriage of the head, the use of the eyes and lips, the movements of the arm, the positions of the hand and the way to walk about the stage. In short he gives a more complete résumé of Ricci's "L'Art du Théatre à Paris" than had been done by Luzán, and to it he adds Pinciano's rules of elocution.*

With the discussion of such minute points the subject matter of the discourse comes to an end.

The last paragraph is an apology for his work against probable detractors and a statement to the effect that such discussions as the one just completed have, in all ages, been worthy of the efforts of the most respectable pens.

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[104] Discurso II, pp. 18-19.
[105] Discurso II, p. 31.
[106] Discurso III, p. 33, refuting Discurso I, p. 97.
[107] Discurso II, pp. 43-51.

Now we are at liberty to revert to that part of the first discourse which, properly speaking, deals with the neo-classic theories of the drama.

It has been shown that, to a certain extent, writers of the old school had succeeded in composing regular plays. What has once been done can be done again, and the tragedy "Virginia" is written only to prove the truth of this last statement. May this example encourage men gifted with natural talent to take up this line of work and carry it on successfully.[108]

Montiano's intention is now to judge his own work with the same rigor shown by him in the examination of the plays considered in the first half of this discourse. "Haré para lograrlo un menudo examen de todo él . . . tocando donde conviniere . . . las reglas . . . sin que se entienda que pretendo persuadir que ha salido mi obra sin tacha alguna ni discrepancia de aquellos principios. . . ." [109] He will welcome the further criticisms of Spanish and foreign authors. The nature of his remarks is going to be determined by the works of well known neo-classic scholars, but, to avoid a display of pedantry, he is not going to quote his authorities.[110] The reader is grateful to him for his decision, for his scheme of criticism consists of the elements of the art such as could be gathered from the perusal of the chapter headings of any good work on the rules, and constant references and quotation marks would only add to the irksomeness of a subject already not over-rich in qualities likely to stimulate the imagination.

It will make the rest of the discourse clearer if at this point we give a brief analysis of the tragedy to be so minutely discussed.

Montiano's "Virginia."—Montiano drew the material of his plot from Livy and from Dionysus of Halicarnassus; he had no knowledge at the time of the existence of the plays of Cueva and of Campistrón, which are entitled "Virginia."

The plot runs as follows:[111] Virginia is betrothed to Icilius but it is known that Claudius the decemvir and the political enemy of Icilius has conceived a lustful passion for Virginia and that so far he has not dared to confess it openly.

As Virginia comes to the Forum to take part in a religious festival with other Roman ladies she tells us so much of the plot in a dialogue with her maid Publicia. She adds that she is in a chronic state of fear lest she should meet Claudius.

Icilius now comes and finds his lady in great dismay at the appre-

[108] Discurso I, p. 80.
[109] Discurso I, p. 81.
[110] Discurso I, p. 82.
[111] Discurso I, pp. 128 ff.

hension caused her by the danger to which she deems herself particularly exposed on this day when her duties compel her to be in the Forum. At first she will not explain the cause of her grief, but as Icilius sees in her tears the evidence of some undiscovered wrong committed against him, Virginia, to silence his suspicions, is compelled to reveal to him her knowledge of the decemvir's love, a knowledge which so far had not reached Icilius. The lover, filled with rage at this revelation, is about to start to wreak bloody vengeance on Claudius when Numitor, Virginia's uncle, contrives to check the young man's angry haste by telling him that he would do better first to seek the alliance of Valerian and of Horace, two senators, who have great power over the common people. In case Claudius tries to use violence against Virginia their help will be invaluable. Icilius leaves to accomplish this mission and Numitor sends a messenger to Lucius, Virginia's father, who is in command of some troops not far from the city.

In spite of these promises of help, it is only with a mind full of the darkest forebodings that Virginia proceeds to the temple with her ladies.

The second act opens with a long monologue by Claudius who bewails the fact that he who controls the Roman empire should find such resistance in a woman's heart. His client, Marcus, assures him that vulgar minds obey the servile laws of virtue but that a man who has control over the state can easily put aside the ordinary rules of good conduct and morality. This advice is no sooner given than Valerian and Horace appear and question Claudius concerning the death of the Roman general Siccius who, it is rumored, was murdered through the orders of Claudius himself. In a burst of rage the decemvir denies the accusation and utters such threats against his accusers that the two senators subsequently decide to unite their cause to that of Icilius and to insure the downfall of Claudius.

Icilius is now made to see that his duty and his love both require him to attack Claudius and the act ends with his threatening words against the tyrant.

The third act offers to Claudius the long wished for opportunity to declare his love to Virginia whom he meets in the Forum accompanied by her ladies.

First the villain flatters, then he threatens. His efforts are of no avail and Virginia retires predicting that the gods will punish him for his audacity. Claudius is now ready to listen to the advice of Marcus who urges prompt and violent action. A diversion is brought about by Icilius, who, prompted by Numitor, comes to offer his services to Claudius and very properly receives only insults from his angry rival. As Icilius gives vent to his renewed indignation, Virginia reappears asking for redress.

Icilius promises that, before the setting of the sun, she shall be avenged.

The beginning of the fourth act reveals the plan that Marcus has suggested to his master. The client of the decemvir intends to claim the person of Virginia under the fiction that, far from being a Roman leader's daughter, she is only the offspring of a slave of his. Her supposed father, Lucius, illegally adopted her, thus taking his property away from Marcus.

This dishonest plan is carried out successfully and Claudius contrives to appear on the scene to give Marcus official sanction to the act. Fortunately Numitor and Icilius rush in in time to rescue Virginia from her captors. Claudius, fearing that Icilius may have a numerous following, grants Virginia a fair trial and in the meantime leaves her in the care of her uncle, Numitor.

It now appears that Icilius, because of the crafty dilatoriness of Valerian and Horace, had the merest handlful of followers with him. Virginia exults at the thought of the bravery of her lover. Would that she were not already his, so that she might now give him all her love.

Lucius, the old father, is introduced in the fifth act; he has just returned to the city after receiving Numitor's message. The old veteran knows of course the absolute falseness of the charge made by Marcus against his daughter, yet such is his fear of the power of Claudius that it is only with the gravest misgivings that he leads his daughter to the trial ordained by the decemvir.

The case is argued before Claudius and, though it is by no means clear that Virginia is to be degraded from her rank, the aged father, losing heart, begs to be allowed to speak privately with his daughter. The request is granted on the condition that Marcus is to be allowed to stand at a short distance.

During the absence of the three, Valerian and Horace threaten Claudius, but soon the father reappears announcing that he has killed his daughter and Marcus as well, for such a course was the only way to safeguard the honor of the family.

Icilius, mad with grief, rushes upon the decemvir, who seeing that the mob is siding with his enemy takes to flight. Soon Icilius returns announcing the death of the tyrant and the tragedy ends with these words of Publicia:

"Vamos Icilio, vamos: pero sea
Sin olvidar en ambos exemplares
De los dos delinquentes insepultos,
Y de la pompa fúnebre que trazas,
Que jamás la virtud quedó sin premio
Ni se libró la culpa del castigo."

This outline will allow us to to follow easily the critical remarks made by Montiano on his own play.

He starts with this definition—"Este poema es la imitación de una acción heroica completa á que concurren muchas personas en un mismo paraje y en un mismo día y que consiste su principal fin en formar ó rectificar las costumbres excitando el terror y lástima." [112]

This discourse develops and illustrates the points mentioned in the definition basing its remarks on the "Virginia."

It might be objected at the very start that Virginia being of plebeian blood is not a proper person to be the heroine of a tragedy. This criticism would be met by pointing out the fact that the common people of the Romans of those days were fully the equals of what is considered the nobility among ordinary nations. If such an argument were not sufficient it may be added that the unusual beauty of Virginia was enough in itself to place that young woman among the best born of her sex.[113] The action dealing with the love affairs of historically important characters is thoroughly unified in spite of the slight undercurrent of political intrigue.[114]

The plot is revealed in its general lines with remarkable swiftness. The reader is plunged "in medias res" with the first scene of the first act where Virginia sketches out the situation in her dialogue with her confidente. Icilius in the third scene of the same act completes that sketch. Soon after, Numitor "rompe el hilo y le aunda sin violencia." The knot remains tied, the reader knows all the conditions and yet he can not predict the end.[115] Virginia's burst of indignation in the third act disarms Claudius for the moment, greatly increasing the excitement of the spectator who knows that such humiliation inflicted on such a man must perforce drive him to desperate action. But what that action will be, the spectator cannot predict and he is startled by the rapidity of the "dénouement" in the fifth act when an unexpected and bloody ending settles all the problems accumulated during the play. Every doubtful point is accounted for "en la última escena del Acto V. en lo que no deja que dudar Icilio sobre ninguna de estas circunstancias." [116]

There is no doubt that the plot of Montiano's tragedy is constructed with great care; it is logical in the main.

It may seem to us that Virginia weeps too abundantly in the first act, since Claudius has not even said a word to her, and the reader is not

[112] Discurso I, p. 85.
[113] Discurso I, p. 86.
[114] Discurso I, p. 86.
[115] Discurso I, p. 92.
[116] Discurso I, p. 97.

absolutely convinced of the greatness of a father who kills his daughter when it seems clear that he might save her by making a show of martial courage, but, on the whole, the interdependence of the scenes is easily discerned. If such qualities of logic and clearness were able to fill an audience with consternation and pity, Montiano would have written an excellent tragedy. But after all is said and done, emotions in an audience are aroused either by the qualities of life in the characters of the play listened to or by the poetical beauty of the diction. The "Virginia" possesses neither of these qualities.

The characters are perfect from the geometrical standpoint. Montiano brings modestly as his own contribution to the neo-classic code a fourth unity, that of character.[117] This fourth unity does harm to Montiano in two ways. First it makes one suspect that our author was not as well read in neo-classic matters as first appeared. Secondly it is the too rigid application of that fourth unity which deprives the characters of the tragedy of every trace of life and reality. These beings are indeed of a delightfully simple psychological makeup. The only actors sufficiently simple in their physical self to be in keeping with souls so lacking in complexity are those who have only two or three gestures corresponding to as many pulls applied to a pair of strings.

Virginia is, throughout, Roman and stoic. In the first act, Publicia, who is always modest and religious, says to her mistress:

> "O qué bien tu conducta corresponde
> á ser hija de Lucio y Numitoria
> y á haber creido las prudentes reglas
> que te dictó la ley de mi cuidado!
> Tu voluntad no quiere sino al dueño
> que la razon paterna te señala:
> tu juicio no se inclina á lo dudoso
> y solamente elige á lo seguro . . .
> Todo es en ti perfecto . . ."

Later, she herself:

> "Sabré tolerar, morir constante
> y oponerme al furor; me lo asegura
> mi espiritu; mas luego la victoria
> será transcendental al Pueblo mío?" [118]

. . . Such a Roman soul was given her by Jupiter . . .

> Por ventura
> fué porque en mi también se verifique
> que no hay nada pequeño en la gran Roma.[119]

[117] Discurso I, pp. 104-105.
[118] Discurso II, p. 127. Act I, Sc. 1.
[119] Discurso II, p. 133. Act I, Sc. 2.

And throughout the five acts her actions are all of the character indicated by the spirit expressed in these quotations.

Likewise Icilius is consistently intrepid; wisdom sits always by the side of Numitor. "En Claudio me figuro que no hay mezcla que enerve el furioso vigor, conque es forzoso que procedan y se acrediten unos vicios tan desenfrenados como irresponsibles de corregir." [120] The following words are worthy of such a consistently depraved person:

> Experimente, Virginia, lo que puede
> quien rige á Roma por que no es regido
> que hasta la religión se prostituya
> á lo que su capricho le proponga.[121]

And so it goes on with Marcus, who is obviously base during five acts, with Valerian and Horace, intellectual twins, whose discourses are perfectly interchangeable and who always clothe "sus particulares fines en el velo de la libertad." [122]

So much for the characters. As for the diction, Montiano chose the blank verse because of its great possibilities in the imitation of prose, far superior to rhymed verse because it does not distract the mind by its clanging of sounds. "Un verso sin consonantes, que es más parecido á la prosa, común lenguage de los hombres." [123] And he adds that not only did Luzán, Pinciano and Cascales agree "de que no es necesario el metro para los Poemas Épico y Dramático," but Garcilaso, Virués, Jáuregui, Quevedo have all given him precedents in this matter.[124] As in the matter of the unity of character, Montiano succeeded far too well in his effort to write unobtrusive verse; no prose could have less cadence than the majority of the lines of the "Virginia."

If Montiano did not believe in the necessity of verse in tragedies, he was convinced that the style of such a piece of writing should be noble and elevated. To avoid all mention of the particular is of course one method of raising language above the ordinary way of speaking. This is why Montiano quite consistently, instead of making his characters speak directly, makes them express themselves in terms of the abstract qualities or conditions of their soul or in terms of parts of their body. Instead of hearing how Virginia and Claudius feel, we hear how their soul is stirred, instead of hearing how they are dismayed or angered, we are told about the state of dismay or anger of their soul, the depth of their grief or the increase of their ire. The subjects of verbs are altogether too

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[120] Discurso I, pp. 106-107.
[121] Discurso I. Act III, Sc. 3.
[122] Discurso I, p. 108.
[123] Discurso I, p. 112.
[124] Discurso I, p. 113.

often such terms as necessity, suspicion, deceit, cunning, conduct, arm, hand, anger, rage, all of which could be advantageously supplied by personal pronouns or by the proper names of the persons who do the acting or feeling or who are spoken of as acting or feeling.* This mania for the abstract term tends as much as the geometrical construction of the intellects and hearts of the characters to make them absolutely unreal, and to make the tragedy unreadable.

With such defects in the psychology of the play and in the diction, defects which of course are shared equally by all second-rate neo-classic plays in all countries, it does not matter much to the reader whether the stage is always full, whether the unities are fairly well kept and whether the moral lesson is clearly stated or not. Nor is he likely to feel either one way or the other concerning the doubts which Montiano entertains about the advisability of the liberties he has taken with the unity of place. Instead of taking one spot on the Forum seen always the same at each rising of the curtain, Montiano had imagined taking various parts of the Forum but always at such an angle that the spot which appeared as the scene of the first act could be seen and recognized.[125] This, Montiano brought forth as a new solution to the knotty problem of the unity of place and he felt that his idea was a better one than that imagined by Luzán who wanted to have parallel sets of stage settings. We have seen that in his second discourse Montiano was to recant from all such heresies and come out uncompromisingly in favor of the strictest idea of unity of place.[126]

In spite of the qualities pointed out and in spite of the interest which should be awakened by the discussion of technical points, the reader, if his effort carries him through the whole tragedy, at last closes the book with a distinct sense of weariness. This does not mean, however, that he has lost his respect for Montiano. Far from it. The author has made his case too clear at the beginning of his discourse. The tragedy may be stillborn, but we know that its author entertained no illusions about its actual charms and the absence of all elements of self-deception on the part of the author removes much of the unpleasant sensation given by bad plays written by vainglorious authors.

Montiano's Athaulfo.—It would be useless to analyze "Athaulfo" with the same degree of care which we have put on "Virginia."

It is an historical drama based on the story of the Gothic King, who, influenced by his Roman wife, Placidia, has decided to sign a lasting peace with his brother-in-law, the Roman Emperor.

Rosamunda who before the coming of Placidia had hoped to share

[125] Diario I, p. 97.

[126] See page 118 of this essay.

the throne with Athaulfo now sees an opportunity for revenge. She excites her lover, Sigerico, and his base friend, Vernulpho, against the King. Sigerico is told that the throne will also win for him the hand of Rosamunda. The Roman ambassador, Constance, whose position at court is similar to that of Orestes in Racine's Andromaque, is aware of the conspiracy against Athaulfo. The death of Athaulfo would suit his purpose; he is too loyal to join with the King's enemies and too weak to denounce them.

As a matter of fact Athaulfo has discovered the plot which Rosamunda and Sigerico are planning against him but he relies absolutely on the great power which the divine right of kings gives him and in spite of all efforts on the part of the conspirators he keeps his faith in his wife.

Knowing that the hostility of Sigerico is due to his desire to win Rosamunda's hand Athaulfo decides to announce the signing of the treaty with Rome and to give to Sigerico Rosamunda's hand at the same solemn state function.

Athaulfo gathers his court and after a rapid review of the history of the Goths he mentions the peace treaty with Rome which he calls the natural conclusion of a brilliant series of wars and conquests. He then proceeds to announce his decision to unite two great Gothic houses in the persons of Sigerico and Rosamunda. No sooner has he stated his will in the matter than Rosamunda cries out that so far Sigerico has done nothing to deserve her love. Aroused by these words the Gothic nobleman steps forward and denounces the treaty as a treacherous means employed by Athaulfo to put the Goths at the mercy of the Romans.

In the confusion which follows this declaration, Vernulpho stabs the King from behind just as he was about to draw his blade against Sigerico who himself advanced sword in hand.

Then and there, however, stops the success of the conspirators, for Valia, a noble Goth, rallies the people to avenge the King, Vernulpho is quickly killed, and soon we hear of the death of Sigerico. Rosamunda sees that all her hopes are lost. Placidia, whom Constance has revived from a fainting spell, assures her enemy of her merciful protection but the haughty woman can not stand such humiliation; she leaps out of the window and dies miserably.

The play ends with a few lines spoken by the Roman ambassador expressing his hope that time may lessen Placidia's grief and make him the object of her affection.[127]

"Athaulfo" is in a way a better play than "Virginia." The use of abstract subjects is much less frequent and Montiano has improved in facility of narration and conversation. If the characters show about as

[127] Discurso II. Athaulfo, pp. 120 ff.

much rigidity as in "Virginia" the moral purpose of the play is not thrust on the reader with so much crudeness. In other words, this tragedy is no better and no worse than many of the second-rate imitations of Corneille to be found in the French literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, for it scarcely need be pointed out that by its display of historical situations, and by its stoic philosophy, this play, as was the "Virginia," is Cornelian in character.

Montiano Judged at Home and Abroad.—The plays of Montiano, in spite of their lack of intrinsic value, awakened a fair amount of interest in and out of Spain. On the whole they were taken more seriously by foreigners than by the Spaniards themselves. Velázquez in his treatise on Castilian poetry, a work which we shall take up a little later, passes no direct criticism on Montiano's production, but quotes, among other favorable criticisms, the "Mémoires de Trévoux" for December 1750 where the "Virginia" is praised for its adherence to the rules and described as a play which it would be difficult to improve either in its structure or in its composition.

Hermilly had translated not only the "Virginia" but also the "Athaulfo" and the two discourses on the Spanish stage. It is through this little two volume translation that the work of Montiano became known to the great German critic Lessing who enthusiastically published a careful résumé of the "Virginia" in his "Theatralische Bibliothek."

In the statements serving as an introduction to this synopsis, Lessing deplores the deep ignorance of German scholars concerning the literature of Spain and it gives him great pleasure to make known to his countrymen the life and works of the greatest tragic poet yet produced by the Spanish peninsula, a writer whom his countrymen need not fear to compare with those of their supposedly superior neighbors.*

To be sure, the subsequent studies of Lessing on the works of Lope and Calderón caused him to reverse his judgment. In the "Hamburg Dramaturgy" he frankly confesses that his first judgment of Montiano's play was erroneous in the extreme and that the "Virginia" must be admitted to be nothing but a Castilian illustration of the French genre known for its regularity and its frigidity.*

This retraction of Lessing occurred, of course, a good many years after the original statement, and we find an echoe of the latter, the very year of its publication, in the edition of the book of Velázquez published in German and with a great abundance of notes by Dieze of Göttingen.*

This scholar who, like Lessing, had but recently become interested in the study of the history of Spanish literature had scented from afar the real ancestry and the real literary affiliations of the "Virginia." He does not feel that this play compares in interest with those Spanish com-

positions which are not written according to the rules, but he remarks on what he feels is the excellence of Montiano's versification, and proclaims him an artist, great not only in the drama, but also in other poetical fields.

In Spain, as in foreign countries, the plays of Montiano, so far as they aroused any interest, did so only among the cultured classes.

The criticisms passed on Montiano by his companions were, as might be expected, partly favorable and partly unfavorable. Also, as is usually the case in the Republic of Letters, the unfavorable comments proved to be the more elaborate and the more bulky. Chief among these is a strange pamphlet by one who hides his real identity under the pseudonym of Jaime Doms.*

This author, in what purports to be a letter to Montiano, states that while in Paris he witnessed the intense enthusiasm which the reading of the Virginia had aroused among cultured Frenchmen. Wishing to thank the great Spanish author for the way he had vindicated his country's literary honor and made it to shine before foreigners, compelling their admiration, Jaime Doms had set himself to writing a letter of sincere praise to Montiano. He had already thanked Montiano for his treatment of the ignorant author of the "Théâtre Espagnol" and was in the act of penning lines in which he called him the father and protector of all Academies, when there entered into the room two friends of his.

These two gentlemen were indiscreet enough to glance at the sheet of paper spread before Doms and catching the general tenor of the letter they broke forth into laughter. The host, in the inocence of his heart, thought that perchance the cause of their glee was some unusual angle of his wig or some unnoticed disorder in his garb, but the two visitors soon opened his eyes on the matter and assured him that what made them laugh was the tone of reverence breathed forth by the letter laid before them.

As we may well imagine the rest of the pamphlet is made up of a three cornered discussion of Montiano's work, the two visitors attacking it while Doms takes on himself the rôle of a naïve and shocked defender.

This discussion is not pleasant reading. It is a despicable, underhanded attack in which all kinds of disloyal weapons are used. The two visitors take flings at Montiano's personal character or else they go over the pages of his book, carefully, one by one, looking for flaws and sneering each time they discover one. They take Montiano to task for writing his plays so late in life, and then they blame him for undertaking a piece of work which in the last analysis is not worthy of a true man's attention.

At each new attack, Doms whimpers some weak defense, which, soon retracted in a spirit of humility, serves only to re-enforce the argument of the hostile critics.

Minute picking to pieces of isolated words or sentences, quibbling over insignificant historical points, and the harping on the theme that Luzán and Montiano are really trying to discredit Spain in the eyes of foreigners, form the bulk of this unsavory discussion. The speakers are in turn treacherous, brutal and coarse.*

Only the bitterest personal jealousy can have given rise to this libel. Under the guise of patriotic indignation the writer has no other purpose but to cover Montiano with slime.

From the many remarks denoting envy of Montiano's official affiliations with a number of learned academies, and the constant hinting that Montiano is an ignoramus in the field of paleography and history, we may fairly safely conclude that Doms was some disappointed rival of Montiano, possibly an unfortunate candidate for a seat in the Academy of History who considered this pamphlet a creditable way of relieving himself of his bile.

One Guevara (Montiano?) answered this libel, taking one by one the points at issue. A third paper appeared, this one also signed with an assumed name and being a rejoinder to the second. Nothing could be gained by a study of this sorry performance. There is no more irritating reading than these arguments based on the principle of the endless chain in which a gentlemanly pedant tries to meet the treachery of a cad.*

The articles of "L'Année Chrétienne" written by Father Croisset which Velázquez quotes as fairly indicative of the attitude of foreigners towards Montiano's plays may possibly have been a much needed comfort to that author issuing wearily from the struggle with Jaime Doms. In it Montiano is called a Spanish Sophocles who, far from imitating Corneille or Racine, avoided the errors of those two authors and proved himself greater than either in his own dramatic productions. Nowhere is he guilty of such an error as that committed by Corneille in his insipid representation of the love of Theseus in the tragedy of Oedipus. Nowhere does he sin against good taste as does Racine when he shows to his public a raging Phedra and tells of the bloody death of Hyppolitus. In his style, he is never florid like Corneille in "Cinna" nor exaggerated like Racine in the monologue of Théramène. "En una palabra, ninguno hasta ahora dió reglas más precisas, más menudas, más comprehensivas, más discretas, más juiciosas, más cabales, para la perfección y para la utilidad de la tragedia que el Señor Montiano, y ninguno las practicó mejor." [128]

This is all very flattering to Montiano, and if the good man was in need of cheer, we hope that his modesty did not prevent him from deriv-

[128] Velásquez. Orígenes de la Poesía Castellana, p. 125.

ing some degree of comfort from a judgment which put him head and shoulders over the greatest authors in all French literature.

Just one detail casts a shadow over all this and makes one suspect that, after all, it might have been unsafe for Montiano to bask in the sunshine of so much praise. Velázquez tells us that the article was translated into Spanish by that notorious practical joker, Father Isla! The record for literary mischief-making established later by that talented writer through his "Diaz Grandes de Navarra" and through his "Gil Blas," fills our minds with suspicion, and as we have not been able to compare the article in question with its supposed original, we feel it our duty to at least point to the possibility of one more "gaminerie" hidden by the witty Spaniard under the fulsome praise of an author, whose performance was palpably as modest as his own character.

Less flattering but more reassuring in tone is the anonymous dialogue between "Sabelli" and "Bartoli." It was written probably shortly after the publication of the plays of Montiano but it was not printed until the days of the "Semanario Erudito," this delay being due to certain passages of the dialogue where the priesthood was spoken of in a derogatory manner.

In this dialogue the two interlocutors discuss whimsically the strange case of the poet who managed to quell the fire of inspiration until past middle life, and, on one of them asking the other how the tragedies had been received in foreign countries, we get this answer which proves to be the sanest and most kindly judgment passed on Montiano even though there is not lacking in it a little dash of irony. "Los Franceses las han alabado y traducido, y los Españoles no han hecho mucho caso de ellas; pero el autor se tiene por otro Eschilo y juzga que si se representaran, las mujeres preñadas malparirían de susto y los muchachos morirían de espanto al ver executar los lances trágicos que en ellos pinta." On the listener's exclaiming that these tragedies must be written with incomparable spirit the speaker replies "Lo que te puedo decir es que si, conforme á las reglas que dió en su primer discurso, hubiese ajusto sus tragedias, serían mejores que las famosas Eumenides de Eschilo, pero yo he conocido y conozco muchos Poetas y Pintores que saben todos los preceptos de la Theórica y en la acción son desgraciados. Esto mismo le ha sucedido á este autor en sus tragedias; pero su bondad merece que se le disimule qualquier defecto porque es un caballero amabilísimo así por sus prendas como por el amor que tiene á las letras y por la propensión que tiene de hacer bien á todo el mundo. Es el padre protector de todos los literatos."[129]

This long quotation is probably typical of the average judgment

[129] Semanario Erudito, v. V, p. 148.

passed by intelligent and educated Spaniards on the dramatic efforts of Montiano. It represents the attitude of the average reader who had no very good reasons either for hating or for greatly admiring the neo-classic movement and its first productions. Such men would, to be sure, feel inclined to poke gentle fun at the prosy old gentleman who in his later years took it into his head to become a dramatic poet, but they would also recognize that the motives back of his slightly ridiculous attempt were distinctly respectable, since they arose from a desire to vindicate the nation's reputation in the eyes of foreigners. Good-natured humor, tempered by the knowledge of the writer's sterling qualities as a man, forms the basis of the above quotation, which we may take as the expression of the fairest judgment pronounced on Montiano by his contemporaries.

As we have already stated, the other two members of the Academy of Good Taste who shared with Montiano his absolute acceptance of the spirit of neo-classicism were Velázquez and Nasarre.

Velázquez.—The former is known chiefly by his sketch on the Origins of Castilian Poetry, a little treatise of some two hundred pages which is more an enumeration of names and dates than a history of literature in the broad sense of the word.* The rather meagre critical material which does break from time to time the monotony of these bare enumerations tends quite consistently to define and to discredit those traits of Spanish literature which we associate with concepticism and cultism. Quite consistently also these remarks tend to place the responsibility for the development of these literary errors on authors not of Spanish birth. Arab authors were the first ones to bring into Spain tendencies to literary extravagance. They loved puns, quibbles, allusions "llevadas á larga distancia" and disproportionate metaphors. Spanish literature suffered somewhat by contact with such imaginative neighbors.* The real contamination which at the beginning of the seventeenth century turned Spanish poetry from the natural channels along which it had made such excellent progress, came from Italy. Bad taste entered into Spain through the return home of those Spanish gentlemen who had fought in the Italian wars or who had merely traveled in the peninsula for pleasure. These evil germs gave rise to literature where bad taste in all its forms flourished marvelously. Some authors ruined the stage by its means while others brought about the undoing of lyric poetry. Ignorance, leading heated imaginations, took possession of all the literary genres and the result was fatal to Spanish literature.

Velázquez is quite aware of the fact that there is nothing new in his assertions. He even feels that to speak of these matters more in detail would be futile, for, thanks to the efforts of the scholars and men of taste who have studied the subject, there is no one in these enlightened

days who does not see the folly of the literary ideals of the seventeenth century: "Sería ofender en cierto modo á un siglo tan instruido como el en que vivimos sospechar que aun oy era necessario este desengaño." [130]

Surely this work of Velázquez does not recommend itself by its originality. Its author attempted for poetry what Montaigne had attempted for the stage and he did not succeed much better. He undertook to make a literary judgment here and there by applying the theoretical principles of Luzán and in this he succeeded but too well. It is literally true with him that Spanish literature is just beginning to regain some luster after a hundred years of worthless productions.

Velázquez is responsible for one of the very few direct tributes to the superiority of a French author that can be recalled in a movement where, pretty generally, admiration for foreign works was tempered by the fear of appearing or of actually being unpatriotic. After praising Luzán for the great services rendered by the "Poetica," Velázquez exclaims that the Comedia will be truly great only if a man like Molière appears on the scene: "Quando la nación logre un genio tan superior como el de este gran Cómico, podrá esperar que se restablezca la comedia Española." [131]

Nasarre.—Nassarre represents a form of neo-classicism not quite as narrow as that of Montiano or Velázquez and he gives proof of more originality than either in the expression of his narrowness.

Desirous to fight for the good cause of regularity and common sense in as efficacious a way as his two colleagues had done, he turned his attention more particularly to the study of the Comedia. His reading of the plays of Cervantes made him wonder at the lack of consistency existing between the principles of criticism which the great Spanish writer expressed in the famous forty-eighth chapter of the Quijote and those which ruled that author's dramatical composition. So far as the ideas expressed were concerned, that forty-eighth chapter might have been written by Luzán himself or by any member of the Buen Gusto group, yet the comedies of Cervantes are as irregular as those of any other playwright of the times.

Nasarre, struck by this lack of conformity between theory and practice, seized upon the happy idea of considering the plays of Cervantes as so many minor Don Quijotes written to ridicule the extravagances of the Comedia. Thus the theory of Cervantes expounded the principles of neo-classic good sense and his plays were parodies meant to ridicule the dramatic productions of those who wrote without the guidance of the rules. Cervantes was thus proved to be perfectly consistent with himself.

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[130] Orígenes, p. 70.

[131] Orígenes.

With a view to illustrating his theses in full, Nasarre published, in two volumes, sixteen of the comedies and "entremeses" of Cervantes.* He naturally picked out those which showed irregularities such as could be explained only by the theory that they were meant to ridicule their own genre. To this selection of plays Nasarre prefixed an introduction where he explained his purpose and then of course proceeded to heap upon the Comedia the usual abuse. Lope is called without more ado the corruptor of the Spanish stage, Calderón is accused of immorality and of lack of imagination. A playwright who must depend on complexity of plot to keep his public amused shows a real lack of imagination.

This apparent lack of regular plays does not discourage Nasarre to the extent of making him pass condemnation on the whole of Spanish literature. He still has enough faith in his race to believe that soon a number of regular or semi-regular plays will be unearthed and given to the public. Then Lope and Calderón will appear in their real relations to the truly great Spanish writers, and their extravagant compositions will sink into insignificance beside the wealth of first class literature which for the first time will be presented to the public.

Who were those authors so superior to Lope and Calderón? In what secret nooks had their masterpieces been kept for over a hundred years awaiting the diligent search of eighteenth century scholars? Nasarre does not even make a pretense at enlightening us; he is guided by faith alone.

This hope of Nasarre represents the state of mind in which the neo-classicists of Spain often found themselves during the first half of the eighteenth century. Having adopted the rules, they felt that Spain was disgraced in her literature, yet, being patriotic Spaniards, they really could not believe in such a disgrace and felt that out of the mass of seventeenth century writings some day, somehow, the works which the literary honor of the country needed so much would be brought to light.

Patriotism and, to be perfectly candid, ignorance, fostered this retrospective hope of a past glorious in a neo-classic sense.

This desire to find respectable plays in what he felt was a disreputable past is so strong in Nasarre that he is almost on the verge of inventing a conspiracy on the part of the writers of irregular "comedias" to keep down authors possessed of the proper literary principles. Cervantes wrote his parodies on "comedias" because he did not dare speak. It was too dangerous: "No pudo explicarse Cervantes con la claridad que le era tan natural, por que se lo impedían la tyranía que se había apoderado del Theatro y los Autores afamadissimos que le fomentaban." [132]

[132] Prólogo to Cervantes' comedies, p. 2.

The illustrations brought out by Nassarre to prove his theory of the real character of Cervantes' comedies are of such a nature as to make that idea quite defensible. On first reading of it, the theory seems absurd, but a little study into the matter leads one to a less absolute judgment. If it is indeed absurd to suppose that all the plays of Cervantes should be disguised literary critiques, it would be unfair to deny that one perchance, "El Rufián Dichoso," may have been composed at least in part as a satire against the literary genre which Cervantes attacked in the forty-eighth chapter of the Quijote. Let us reproduce here the quotation from the play just mentioned on which Nasarre based his opinion with apparently a good deal of reason.

The illustration brought by Nasarre to prove his theory as to the real character of the comedies of Cervantes is very startling and almost convincing when taken without reference to what precedes and what follows it in the play of which it is a part. What does arouse the reader's suspicions is the fact that Nasarre has after all but one convincing illustration, and a very brief study of that convinces one that, in spite of its attractive appearance, it is quite insufficient to prove the author's sweeping generalization.

The illustration is taken from the second act of the "Rufián Dichoso." The first act has given us the picture of the wild life of a young student named Lugo who with his mad revelries has filled the inhabitants of Seville with scandalized admiration and the legal authorities with impotent anger. This young scapegrace, who has repeatedly lost at cards, when playing with a certain boon companion of his, takes an oath that if he loses again he will break with society and become a highwayman. As a matter of fact, his luck turns and he makes a clean sweep of the stakes. This change in his bad luck which was fast becoming chronic brings about another change of greater importance, for as he has promised to himself to become a highway robber, now he decides to give up his wild life and to become a saint. The stage directions at that point call for a display of heavenly spirits, or at least one angel, and the act ends with these lines:

Cuando un pecador se vuelve
A Diós con humilde celo
Se hacen fiestas en el Cielo.

So far there is nothing to differentiate this play from any other of the many comedies hinging on repentance and holy life following hard upon a youth spent in wild debauch.

It is at the outset of the second act that the surprise awaits us. The scene is to be shifted from Seville to Mexico and, probably with a view to helping us in the swift journey thus made necessary, the second act

begins with a dialogue between two unexpected characters, Curiosity and Comedy. The conversation of these two allegorical characters bears as little relation to the rest of the play as do the characters themselves, for it consists of the reproaches directed by Curiosity to Comedy for having abandoned the rules of composition recommended by the ancients: What made you give up the cothurn, why did you reduce your acts from five to three, and why do you represent actions taking one instantly from here to Flanders? I can scarcely recognize you, tell me the reasons for such profound change in your makeup. Comedy thus challenged to give an account of itself starts on an eighty-four line speech apologizing for its present state, and laying the blame of it all on the real differences which separate the literary taste of the day from that of Antiquity. Times have changed and if you consider our epoch:

No soy mala, aunque desdigo
De aquellos preceptos graves
Que me dieron y dejaron
En sus obras admirables
Séneca, Terencio y Plauto
Y otros griegos que tu sabes.
He dejado parte dellos,
Y he también guardado parte
Porque lo quiere así el uso
Que no se sujeta al arte.

As I am expected to actually represent events to the public instead of telling about them as formerly, perforce I must go where the events take place——

Voy allí donde acontecen:
Disculpa del disparate.
Y la comedia es un mapa
Donde no un dedo distante
Verás a Londres y a Roma
Á Valladolid y a Gante.
Muy poco importa al oyente
Que yo en un punto me pase
Desde Alemania á Guinea,
Sin del teatro mudarme.
El pensamiento es ligero;
Bien pueden acompañarme
Con él, do quiera que fuere,
Sin perderme ni cansarme.

Then Comedy shows how this very play "El Rufián Dichoso" is constructed on just such lines. Three places are visited, Sevilla, Toledo and Mexico, and the three acts correspond to the three stages in the hero's life; the days of his profligacy, those of his holy life, and then his death

followed by the working of miracles through the agency of the relics he left behind him.

Mal pudiera yo traer
Á estar atenida al arte
Tanto oyente por las ventas
Y por tanto mar, sin naves.

Curiosity is only moderately satisfied with these explanations and closes the scene with these words:

Aunque no lo quedo en todo
Quedo satisfecha en parte,
Amiga; por esto quiero
Sin replicarte, escucharte.

This dialogue Nasarre took as proof of a consistently ironical attitude on the part of Cervantes towards the Comedia. He knew the rules, he knew the absurdities which followed necessarily on the breaking of the same. His play was intended to illustrate the futility of compositions meant to suit the popular taste.

Unfortunately there is absolutely nothing in the play itself indicative of a satirical attitude on the part of Cervantes. The first act which we have discussed is a fairly brilliant sketch of Bohemian life in Spain. It does not contain a line or a word tending to show on the author's part any desire to express ideas on literary criticism. As for the second and the third acts, they are distinctly religious in character. To be sure, Lucifer, dressed according to the latest fashion, has a considerable part in the action together with a pair of grotesque demons, but these characters in no way interfere with the mystic atmosphere created by the two acts. At no time do these strange characters give to the reader the impression that the author entertained any ironical purpose in introducing them.

On reading the play there is quite enough to persuade us that we are dealing with no unusual form of the Spanish Comedia and least of all with a parody on the same. The "Rufián Dichoso" was written first to delight, then to edify an average Spanish audience of the day. Its author had no motives beyond these two. It is even doubtful whether the dialogue between "Comedia" and "Curiosidad" is intended to censure the Comedia. It would seem more reasonable to consider it simply as a way on the part of the author to recognize a condition without attempting to pass judgment on the matter.

Why such a discussion should break in between two acts of a comedy is not easily explained, but its presence unsustained by further evidence in the rest of the comedy is not sufficient to make it a parody on the most popular of Spain's literary genres.* Indeed few are the "comedias" not

containing passages or episodes hard to reconcile or even to fit in readily with the general plot. Cervantes knew the rules; they presented a problem of great interest to him. In the course of his fanciful play it occurred to him to touch a little on them. It may be that his hero's unexpected trip to Mexico brought, by contrast, such matters to his mind and he merrily introduced the dialogues in question, thus proving his inalienable right as a Spanish writer to be whimsical at all times and learned at the illogical moment. He knew doubtless that such apparently erratic processes are also artistic devices of no small value.

Nasarre, as we have already remarked, believed firmly that there had existed an age when neo-classicism was in favor in Spanish letters and this preconceived idea warped his judgment in this matter. "Curó Cervantes á los enfermos de Caballería; quiso curar á los malos Cómicos representando y remedando; sobre estas ocho comedias que se reimprimen, se podrían hacer muchas observaciones que será razon dejarlas á los que las leyeren." [133]

No reader has yet come forward with the observations said to be possible and Nasarre seems to stand convicted of having based an enormous generalization on most inadequate foundations.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV.

P. 62. Porcel in his "Juicio Lunático" quoted by Cueto, B. A. E., p. xci, describes this Spanish "Chambre Bleue" while describing an imaginary Academy. "Quedé absorto al ver lo regio y espacioso de la magnífica galería, cuyas doradas rejas daban vista á los jardines. Sus grandes paredes vestían primorosas pinturas, unas mitológicas y otras simbólicas que explicaban todos los géneros de la poética. A trechos las estatuas de las Musas con sus respectivas insignias y en el testero Apolo coronado de rayos y pulsando la dorada lira. Desde esta pieza se dejaba registrar en parte otra, no ménos régia que servía de biblioteca, la cual constaba de todas las obras poéticas de los españoles; siendo más y mejor lo manuscrito é inédito que lo que había fatigado las prensas."

P. 63. Cueto, B. A. E., v. LXI, p. 138. "Juicio Satírico que legó Don José Antonio Porcel de su propia obra. El Adónis en la Academia del Buen Gusto."

P. 66. In his "Orígenes de la Poesía Castellana" Velázquez makes the following statement: "También merece una particular estimación el ingenio del Conde de Torrepalma bien desempeñado en el discurso sobre la Comedia Española que aun no ha dado á la luz" (between pages 76 and 107).

P. 67. Discurso sobre las Tragedias Españolas. De Don Agustín de Montiano y Luyando. II ed. Madrid, 1750. "Censura," by Father Juan de Aravoca.

P. 67. Nasarre refers to that author without naming him. "Debieron antes de erigirse en juicios de nuestro teatro y antes de imputarle monstruosidades y de

[133] Prólogo to plays of Cervantes, last page.

atribuir al suyo todos los primores, debieron instruirse de la que ciertamente no supieron y les era necessario para no precipitar y torcer el juicio." Speaking of foreign authors, Vicente García de la Huerta in the prologue to his "Theatro Hespañol," page 160, tells us that the work criticized by Montiano was written by Du Perron. "No obstante la general ignorancia que como se ha visto, reyna entre los Franceses de las cosas relativas á nuestro Theatro, como el carácter de muchos de sus ingenios es el atreverse á todo, se arrojó en el año 1738 M. Du Perron á dar por extractos algunas comedias Hespañolas con el título de 'Theatro Hespañol' sacando, al parecer, las peores de ellas, ó acaso no sabiendo distinguirlas."

P. 68. Ticknor, v. I, ch. xiii, p. 241. Among imitations of the Celestina. 1547.

P. 70. Discurso, 64. He will not make use of them in this discourse "pero si afirmaré que por mayor son obras no desnudas de mérito y que las más podrían aspirar á distinguirse entre las mejores." It may be that he had in mind the many manuscripts referred to by Porcel in the description of a drawing room supposed by Cueto to be that of the Duchess of Lemos. (See note above, p. 79.)

P. 72. Pinciano. Spanish philologian, born at Valladolid about 1473, died at Salamanca 1553. Professor of Greek at Alcalá and later at Salamanca.

P. 72. Bourgoing in his "Nouveau voyage en Espagne," v. I, p. 360, gives an interesting description of the conditions which Montiano was trying to reform. "Deux toiles paralléles faisant face aux spectateurs, composaient toute le mécanisme de leur théâtre: j'en ai encore vu de cette espèce. Le souffleur au défaut d'une niche particulière et ne pouvant trouver place dans les coulisses, se tient derrière la seconde toile, sa lumiére d'une main et la pièce de l'autre et saute rapidement d'un côté du théâtre à l'autre pour souffler l'acteur qui a besoin de son discours: ce qui à la faveur de la transparence de la toile est sensible à tout l'auditoire, et ne peut qu'ajouter à son divertissement. Mais il n'en est plus ainsi dans les grandes villes. . . . On est, seulement d'abord fort étonné d'entendre le souffleur réciter tous les rôles presqu'aussi haut que les acteurs et on est tenté de prier ceux-ci de se taire, pour laisser parler seul celui qui les supplée si bien tous."

P. 72. Discurso II, pp. 70-112. Bourgoing, in the travels mentioned already, says of the acting on the Spanish stage: "Sur l'art de jouer la comédie—Les gestes répondent aux autres parties de la déclamation. Presque toujours forcés et faux, ils se renferment dans un cercle étroit. Inventés par l'ineptie, ils sont consacrés par une routine, dont aucun acteur n'oserait s'ecarter," v. I, p. 366. Signorelli, v. IV, p. 205, goes into greater detail—"l'attore seguendo i delirij della poesia con gesti di scimmie delle mani, de' piedi, degli occhi, del corpo tutto radi pingendo, non giá lo spiritu del sentimento e della passione ma le parole delle metafore insolenti accompagnandone ciascuna con gesto che le indichi. Di maniera che ho veduto io stesso l'attore tutto grondante di sudore per lo studio che pone ad imitare i movimenti del becco, delle ali, degli artigli di un uncello di rapina, il serpeggiar di un ruscello, lo strisciar della serpe, il corvettar del cavallo ed il guizzar del pesce."

P. 79. Illustrations of this may be found anywhere in the play. From act I, sc. 1 and 2: "dará la novedad á la sospechosa motivo—las repulsas—el amor—la torpeza—engañosos alhagos—astuto conato—que se obstine la importuna ceguedad con que el me molesta—arrojo genio me lo persuaden"—all from page 127. "Tu voluntad no quiere . . . tu juicio . . . tu honestitad . . . tu discreción . . . el pavor . . . el lustre . . . su inclinacion . . . el animo zozobre . . . cuidado y zelo

habían trahido al Foro"—all to be found with many others within the next two or three pages.

P. 81. Lessing. Sämtliche Schriften, by Karl Lackmann. 1890. V. VI, p. 70. Auzzug aus dem Trauerspiele Virginia des Don Augustino de Montiano y Luyando. "Ich schmeichle mir, dass schon die gegenwärtige Nachricht ihn um ein grosses erhöhen wird, und dass meine Leser erfreut sein werden, den grössten tragischen Dicther kennen zu lernen, den jezt Spanien aufweisen und ihn seinen Nachbarn entgegen stellen kann."

P. 81. Same, v. X, p. 75. "Die Virginia des Augustino de Montiano y Luyando est swar spanisch geschrieben; aber kein spanisches Stück: ein blasser Versuch in der correcten manier der Französen, regelmässig aber frostig. Ich bekenne sehr gern, dass ich bey weiten so vorteilhaft nicht mehr davon denke, als ich wohl ehedem muss gedacht haben.

"Wenn das zweite Stück des nehmlichen Verfassers nicht besser gerathen ist; wenn die neueren Dichter der Nation, welche eben diesen Weg betreten wollen, ihn nicht glücklicher betreten haben; so mögen sie mir es nicht übel nehmen, wenn ich noch immer lieber nach ihrem alten Lope und Calderon greife, als nach ihnen."

P. 81. Dietze, p. 373, note to that page. "Aber weder die genaue Beobachtung der Regeln . . . noch die sehr schöne Versification, haben diese Stücke so intercessant machen können, als viele sind, in denen die Regeln nicht so ängstlich beobactet worden." Also praise as poet, p. 265. J. A. Dietze was a professor at Göttingen and died in 1785. His notes to the translation of the work of Velázquez doubled the size and the worth of the original.

P. 82. Carta escrita por Don Jayme Doms Contra el Discurso sobre las Tragedias Españolas y la Virginia de el Señor Don Agustino de Montiano y Luyando.

P. 83. Carta, etc., by Doms, p. 21. "El fin del Señor D. Agustín no es ni ha sido el de vindicar la nación sino el de dar dos Tarascadas á Lope de Vega—como se ve al aire conque insulta á quantos hablan bien de él." Accusing Montiano of giving Luzán too much glory. "Todo cabe que estos señores han repartido entre tres, á lo que oigo, toda la gloria de la Poesía Española." Typical of word criticism, Montiano had written "imiten este rumbo y lo mejoren"—Doms remarks—"los rumbos se siguen." Gloats over fact that Montiano did not know that twelve "millas de Italia son tres y no tres y media"—of modern leagues. Triumphantly quotes from Pinciano, Cascales, Gonzales de Salas to prove that Montiano did not invent the fourth unity. Accusing him of ignorance—"yo aseguro á Vd. que nadie reprehenda al Señor D. Agustino por averle hallado con instrumento de letra Gótica en las manos, desojándose por leer alguna dicción de que solo quedaron en el pergamino algunas casi imperceptibles señales de sus lineamentos; porque como de muchacho no tuvo afición á esta casta de trabajos, no es mucho que no se apasione de ellos en edad que necesita anteojos," p. 9.

P. 83. Examen de la Carta que supone impresa en Barcelona y escrita por Don Jaime Doms etc. le ofrece al juicio de los Inteligentes y desapasionados D. Domingo Luis de Guevara, Abogado de los Reales Consejos. Madrid. The third pamphlet was entitled "Crisis de un Folleto cuyo Título es: Examen de le Carta, etc.," its author D. Faustino De Quevedo, Salamanca, 1754. This man is undoubtedly the same who masqueraded under the pseudonym of Doms. As for the identity of Luis de Guevara it is not so easy to say. The concluding lines of the pamphlet are certainly not in Montiano's style. In them Jaime Doms is made

to pass an examination. "Pues venga aca;—porqué se embarcó en esta crítica?" He admits that "tenía gran gana de decir que D. A. de M. merecía estar recogido por haber compuesto una tragedia . . de llamarle cien veces Director perpetuo de la Historia . . . que los padres de Trévoux con manifiesto error malicioso ó grossera ignorancia alaban á D. I. de Luzán y que esta gloria es falsa y no merecida, etc. Confiesso mi pecado. Y ¿qué pena le impondría el Juez? No lo sabemos. Pues vamos comiendo," p. 65. A note in Ticknor's handwriting on one of the Ticknor Collection copies states that Guevara is certainly a pseudonym, but that nothing proves that it hides Montiano's identity.

P. 85. Orígenes de la Poesía Castellana por Don Luis Joseph Velázquez, Caballero del Orden de Santiago, de la Academia Real de la Historia y de las Inscripciones, Medallas y Bellas Letras de Paris. En Málaga Año 1754.

P. 85. Orígenes, etc., p. 30, also p. 68. Speaking of the contamination of good taste—"contribuyendo á ello con su mal exemplo los Italianos de quienes nosotros la ciencia habíamos antes aprendido. Este desaprobado gusto pasó por modo de contagio á los Españoles que viajaron entonces por Italia."

P. 87. Comedias y Entremeses de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. Con una dissertación, ó Prólogo sobre las Comedias de España. 1749. Madrid. The plays included in that collection are: T. I. El Gallardo Español. La Casa de los Zelos. Los Baños de Argel. Entremeses: El Juez de los Divorcios; El Rufián Viudo; La Elección de los Alcaldes de Dajanzo. La Guarda cuidadosa. El Vizcaíno fingido. T. II. El Rufián dichoso. La Gran Sultana Doña Catalina de Oviedo. El Laberinto de Amor. La Entretenida. Pedro de Urdemalas. Entremeses. El Retablo de las maravillas. La Cueva de Salamanca. El Viejo zeloso.

P. 90. Some foreigners took Nasarre's theory quite seriously. We read the following statement in J. F. Peyron's "Nouveau Voyage en Espagne," p. 234, which refers to Cervantes: "Il voulut aussi corriger le théâtre. Il composa plusieurs pièces si décousues, si eloignées des règles que prescrit au moins la vraisemblance, mais si semblables en tout à celles qu'on jouait alors, qu'elles furent reçues avec applaudissement. L'ironie et la leçon furent perdues pour son siècle. . . . Cervantes n'osa pas s'expliquer d'une manière plus claire."

CHAPTER V.

The Spread of the Neo-Classic Doctrines Among the Middle Class.

In the years that intervene between the discontinuation of the gatherings of the Academy of Good Taste and the beginning of the reign of Charles III, that is between 1751 and 1759, we do not find any writings devoted strictly to neo-classic criticism.

The Reign of Ferdinand VI.—Ferdinand VI had made it his policy to give the country the peace and rest which it needed so much. His one aim had been to let the government do its work as quietly as possible; he was by no means a reformer. New ideas received no encouragement from him. The negative virtues of the monarch seem to have acted as a damper on the influx of ideas from across the Pyrenees, and as we have just stated they found no one single standard-bearer during the better part of the reign.

During the life-time of Barbara of Braganza the Italian opera was very popular at court. Italian singers, the most famous of whom was the royal favorite, Farinelli, gave elaborately staged performances, but after the death of the queen the grief-stricken king fell into a state of quasi-imbecility, losing completely his interest in the pleasures as well as in the duties of life.

This absence of interest on the part of the ruler, if it did not promote literary discussions, did not on the other hand tend to check the natural development of the germs which had been sowed at times of greater intellectual activity.

The publication by Isla in 1758 of Fray Gerundio testified to the gradual spread of the neo-classic ideals of simplicity during the quiescent period.

What Isla satirized with true Spanish verve in the nonsensical rantings of his friar was the lack of decorum and the scorn of reason exhibited by those whose duty it was to practice sacred oratory. Just as Hervás had given a satire on bad writers, Isla gave a satire on bad preachers and, though Fray Gerundio made no specific reference to neo-classicism, it was nevertheless at once one of its fruits and one of its instruments.

It may also be added that, throughout the reign of Ferdinand VI, Feijóo continued the publication of his "Cartas Eruditas" and that the well-known essay on the greater usefulness of French as compared with

Greek was given to the public a short time only after the death of the king.[134]

Official Propaganda under Charles III.—The coming to the throne of Charles III infused new vitality into the government and indirectly into all forms of intellectual life in Spain. This active, straightforward monarch urged reforms in all branches of administration and, as reforms meant order and reason, the various forms of Gallic rationalism followed in the wake of the movement. With Aranda as prime minister, neo-classicism made rapid progress, but at this point we must make one thing clear, namely, that while one part of this renewed movement was the legitimate result of the labors of Luzán and of Montiano the other was a forced culture promoted by the government and by men who had no distinct literary or artistic gifts but who took up the movement simply because they felt that it was an introduction to the less innocuous forms of rationalism which, as a matter of fact, were to convert later in the century so many Spaniards into philosophers and doctrinaires of uncertain usefulness to the nation.

Since this official and unliterary current in the neo-classic movement is closely allied to the purely literary and esthetic trend we must, before taking up the study of the latter, make a statement describing the former.

This unliterary movement was primarily journalistic in its nature. Clavijo y Fajardo,* a man imbued with the ideas of the French philosophers, founded his newspaper, "El Pensador," in 1762, and through it began an active campaign of aggression on the old Spanish stage.[135] Another publicist, Nifo, followed his example, though in more measured terms, and even hazarding at times words in defense of authors who were being too roughly treated by his contemporary. These journalistic debates reached of course a much larger public than had been the case with the literary discussions of Luzán and Montiano, which took place primarily among a few scholars and wits, scarcely going out of their polished circles.

Aranda, who had a genuine interest in the future of the stage of his country and who, as a minister of Charles III had great faith in administrative methods, instituted a regular campaign of theatrical reform.

In 1763 he directed Nifo to draw up a plan of the changes required to regulate and improve the conditions of the drama in Spain. Aranda felt that Clavijo would have been too drastic in his methods. Cotarelo y Mori tells us that Nifo's ideas of reform were not very far-reaching[136] —"todas se reducen á convertir el teatro en una escuela de moral la que

[134] B. A. E., v. LVI, p. xii.

[135] Cotarelo y Mori, pp. 45 and 49. Note page 203.

[136] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 49.

proscribiendo todo amor que no fuese filial y el de la patria, sirviese de elemento educativo hasta para los niños." Nifo spoke of Christianizing the stage.

The good intentions of the prime minister were made ineffective by the political disturbances which followed, but it was these same arguments and this same spirit which brought about in 1765 the suppression of the Autos Sacramentales. N. F. de Moratín's "Desengaños," which we are to take up later, were but another form, and perhaps not the most effective, of the spirit expressed by the articles of Clavijo y Fajardo and of Nifo.[137]

In 1767, Bernardo Iriarte to help out his friend Ayala, who had been made censor for the stage, wrote another plan of reform, more complete than the one by Nifo. Cotarelo y Mori gives the full text of this plan.[138]

Its main ideas were that obscenity in subject and baseness in form were not to be tolerated. Comedies were to be altered so as to meet the requirements of the unities and of verisimilitude. In connection with the last named point comedies were to be stripped of the parts which made it necessary for actors to impersonate such things as the mane of a horse, the wings of an eagle, the horns of a bull, or what not. Comedies with magic, with friars, or with devils were to be condemned once for all.

This idea of pruning and otherwise altering comedies until they should fit in with neo-classic requirements had already been suggested by Montiano and it is very probable that in writing his rather entertaining plan of reform the fabulist's brother had in mind the prefaces to the Virginia and to the Athaulfo as well as Moratín's "Desengaños." However this may be, Aranda took him at his word and asked him to select from the rich stores of seventeenth century comedies those which by a few changes could be made presentable. Bernardo courageously set himself to work and out of six hundred comedies which he examined he picked out seventy which offered some possibility of reform.[139]

It may be that after all Bernardo Iriarte had no great confidence in this method of preparing plays for the reformed stage, for he hastens to suggest another way of obtaining good plays, namely, to translate the best of the French and of the Italian repertoires.

Aranda, who listened to these suggestions and who took them seriously, decided that the public playhouses of Madrid were not fit places in which to try such experiments. He had already attempted various reforms at the theaters of "La Cruz" and "El Príncipe." To reduce the

[137] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 45.
[138] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 420.
[139] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 66.

rivalry between these two theaters he had ruled that the companies of each should make use of each other's halls in alternation. He had increased the price of tickets so as to obtain a fund for the renewing of the scenery with every new play. It was due to his protection that plays like "Nicopsis" and "Hipsipile," translated by Nifo,[140] had been presented to the public of Madrid. In all these endeavors he had met with sufficient resistance from the general public to feel the need of being in control of playhouses where an audience in sympathy with his reforms could be counted upon. This is why he erected in 1768 a theatre in each of the main royal residences.*

From this date until the fall of the minister, a numerous and bewildering array of French and Italian tragedies translated by Nifo, by Clavijo or by the Iriartes were performed on these royal stages by picked companies of artists. Let us merely mention the fact that, for the sake of verisimilitude, these translations were generally in prose. Such a detail is a decisive clue to the nature of the spirit which animated this orgy of regularity and of all Aristotelian virtues.*

This brief statement characterizes perhaps sufficiently the governmental side-stream of neo-classicism. There is no doubt that, what with the efforts of journalists and what with the rulings of Aranda, knowledge of the neo-classic rules must have been spread broadcast through all classes of society. In these few years Aranda must have done more for their diffusion than all the patient toil of the men whom we have studied in the first part of this essay.

This intensive popularization was not altogether a good thing for the future of the rules. First of all, under the pens of such writers as Nifo and Clavijo, the rules did not gain in dignity. The rules of criticism when bellowed by journalists quite lost the philosophical background which tempered their harshness as, for instance, in the work of Luzán. These men already had, to an unpleasant degree, the cocksureness and the shallowness of the lesser "philosophes," the word being given its exclusively eighteenth century meaning. They added absolutely nothing to the rules; quite on the contrary they simplified them to such an extent that they made them more mechanical than ever and altogether futile. They reduced all criticism to this: a work must obviously have a unity, be true to life, dignified, and moral. If it fails to meet any one of these requirements it is inadequate as a work of art. Judgments based on such simple principles could not fail to arouse the indignation of men gifted with real literary instinct and could not seem otherwise than absurd to the masses.

[140] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 64.

Even if it had not cheapened criticism this governmental interference would have been sufficient to ruin the future of the rules of neo-classic criticism because the common people were ready enough to see in these government regulations the same petty and tyrannical spirit which in 1766 had attempted to dictate what Spaniards should wear and which had brought about a bloody uprising against the power of the king.[141]

While this rather ill-advised effort was being made on the part of the government, the literary men of Spain were helping it with vigor and with display of true talent. They were continuing the work begun by Luzán and adding noteworthy monuments to the critical literature of Spain.

N. F. de Moratín.—The first in date and the most important of these literary champions of neo-classicism was N. F. de Moratín. In 1762 and 1763 this author had come to the support of Clavijo y Fajardo, who, as we have seen, had voiced the sentiment of many against the public performance of the Spanish genre known as the "Autos Sacramentales." In his "Desengaños al Teatro Español" N. F. de Moratín attacks the Spanish stage with a vigor approached only by the famous satire of Hervás against the bad writers of his day, and with an effort at logic worthy of Luzán himself. In these aggressive prose essays N. F. de Moratín aims at having all his remarks based on firm reason. "All sciences are founded on Nature and poetry is a science." Any science not based on Nature is nonsense, and when that's said everything is said. Some may claim that, after all, man's will is free and that what was right for Aristotle may be nonsense so far as we are concerned. No, sir! Nature created the rules; Aristotle was the merest observer of Nature and any simpleton, had he stopped to think, could have culled them and tabulated them with as much success as the great philosopher. "He saw that the whole purpose of the stage was to deceive . . ." and with this statement the lively author starts on a swiftly moving disquisition on verisimilitude and the unities with occasional vitriolic side-flings at the hostile party. In the course of the philippic Lope reaps his reward for the too great desire which he had displayed of catering to the whims of the lower classes. Lope had stated in his "Arte Nuevo de Hacer Comedias" that the thing to do was to please the public, leaving the reader to conclude that it was none of the author's fault if the taste of the public was bad. N. F. de Moratín has no patience with this casuistry: "Believe me, to bring it about that works written according to rules fail to please the public, the Almighty Power of God would have to turn the whole order of Nature topsy-turvy, because art is based on Nature and to speak

[141] F. Rousseau, Le règne de Charles III. d'Espagne, v. I, ch. vi.

of a work written according to art is to speak of a good work." This is so well known, he continues, that irregular comedies do not hope to please the public on their own merits. They depend more and more for success on pageants, on machines and most of all on the number and the attractiveness of the "corps de ballet" of the companies which present them to the public. Such men as Lope and Calderón, far from stooping to satisfy the common taste, have done everything to debase it from its healthful condition to that of their own.*

The second and the third of these essays treat exclusively of the "Autos" of Calderón and by applying strictly the doctrines of verisimilitude and of didactic morality the author completely flays them in spite of the real merits of so many of these compositions. For this Moratín should not be blamed too severely. The case of the autos was precisely that of the Comedia. The great dramatists of the seventeenth century had written plenty of magnificent plays but they were made to suffer for their few failures and for the impotence of their imitators. Likewise the playing, in the eighteenth century, of immoral or even obscene autos brought disgrace on the author who had given the best representatives of the genre.

There is a striking contradiction between the style of N. F. de Moratín in these essays and the subject matter treated. The style by its dash, its brilliancy and its mobility is worthy of the seventeenth century and we have seen how didactic the subject matter is. It is very interesting to read subject matter worthy of Boileau couched in style not unlike that of Quevedo.

This contradiction is not a superficial matter. It really existed in the nature of the man, for N. F. de Moratín was very much in the position of Porcel, that member of the Academy of Good Taste whose doctrines condemned the very productions of his pen. The same year which saw the publication of the "Desengaños" saw also that of Moratín's comedy "La Petimetra," a work written with all the rigor of the art except for the fact that it contains but three acts, rhymed in assonance, and which by its general tone in no way gave the impression of being a neo-classic piece of work. N. F. de Moratín was not isolated in his literary effort to curb writers to the use of the rules. The days of the Academy of Good Taste had long gone by, but a group of authors had in a somewhat different spirit taken up its work. This group of literary men met at an inn kept by an Italian and it became known as "La Tertulia de la Fonda de San Sebastián."

Cotarelo y Mori in his "Época de Iriarte" has given all that is known about this company of authors.[142] They met informally and were to talk

[142] Cotarelo y Mori, pp. 112-127.

only on topics dealing with poetry, the stage or bull fights. Among their numbers were many Italians, Signorelli and Conti being the most important of these, while Moratín, Iriarte and Cadalso were the most capable of the Spaniards who frequented these meetings.

Menéndez y Pelayo [143] and Cotarelo y Mori have remarked upon this Italian element present in the tertulia. Both have pointed out with evident relief that the influence of that body when it was not purely Spanish was at least Italian and not French. This is of course true in the matters dealing with lyric poetry. The only French poet who was at all read was J. B. Rousseau, but the fact remains that the really important influence of the tertulia was along neo-classic lines, or at least its most visible effort was along those lines and what did it matter whether the rules were expounded by Spaniards or by Italians? The very fact that they were expounded at all, at this late date, was a tribute to Corneille, to Racine, to Voltaire and to many of their compatriots less worthy of the honor. There can be but little doubt that neo-classicism in the eyes of the contemporaries of Signorelli was a French form of thought.

The prominent members of the "Tertulia" of San Sebastián undertook to create original plays as had already been done by Montiano. These plays were to displace the multitude of translations which had sprung up under the patronage of Aranda. N. F. de Moratín himself gave three tragedies; his friend Ayala is remembered for his "Numancia Destruida"; Cadalso composed his "Sancho García." Similar efforts were made by men not belonging to the Tertulia. Thus Huerta gave his "Raquel," Sedano his "Jabel" and Triguero his "Witing."

With the exception of "Raquel," none of these tragedies possessed the qualities necessary to success. To study them in detail would be a task as dreary as it would be useless, for they share with Montiano's works, their dullness, their frigidity and their artificial character. To be convinced of this we need but glance at the best two of the group, the "Hormesinda" of Moratín and the "Sancho García" of Cadalso.

Moratín's Hormesinda.—Hormesinda, the sister of Pelayo, has been compelled during her brother's absence to give her hand to the Moorish renegade Munuza. The lady does not hesitate to show her scorn for her husband and Tulga, the latter's servant, advises his master to do away first with her and then with her brother, thus obtaining full political control.

Pelayo returns and eagerly seeks his sister to tell her of his recent successes. After a long monologue to that effect, he discerns that the lady is weeping in spite of the good news brought by her brother. The

[143] Ideas Estéticas; Heterodoxos.

cause of these tears is that Hormesinda does not dare tell her brother of her forced marriage. Pelayo becomes very suspicious at this show of grief. He suspects her honor and his suspicions increase when old Trasamundo hints darkly that everything is not well with the hero's sister.

Soon Pelayo cordially greets Munuza, who after a few words of welcome shows him forged proofs of the bad moral character and of the bad political faith of Hormesinda. Pelayo, at his next meeting with his sister, reproaches her in general terms such as befit neo-classic style. Hormesinda is thus led to believe that her brother has discovered her shameful marriage with the renegade. She faints and just then enters Trasamundo who urges Pelayo to avenge the wrong done his family. Of course the old man is talking about the marriage forced upon Hormesinda while Pelayo thinks that he is referring to the matter brought up by Munuza. Munuza urges Pelayo to take revenge on his sister, and the hero, goaded on by so many fiery words and by such tangible proofs, talks a great deal and threatens at every word though no action takes place.

After a time Hormesinda discovers that what she is blamed for is not her marriage. She boldly reproaches Pelayo for his lack of faith in her and calls on the testimony of Trasamundo to clear her of all wrongs, but luck has it that Trasamundo leaves at that very moment and Pelayo, who was on the point of believing his sister innocent, now condemns her to death. We hear that all preparations have been made outside the walls for the execution and soon after the death of Hormesinda is announced.

In the meanwhile Trasamundo has succeeded in saying the few words which uttered sooner could have spared his friend such great tribulations. Pelayo is at last enlightened, he dashes out in search of the traitor Munuza but not without having first expressed his indignation at length.

Suddenly Hormesinda enters. As she was about to be burnt, a party of bold Cantabrians appeared below the walls, rescued the lady and, under the leadership of Alfonso, forced their way to the palace. Pelayo who had gone into the city to slay Munuza now returns in time to kill Tulga. The tragedy ends with the punishment of all culprits.

In considering the plot only, this tragedy is unusually weak from the fact that all complications arise from the incredible lack of understanding of Trasamundo and the stupidity of Pelayo, who because of the words of one person condemns his sister to death, then through the words of another restores her to his confidence and finally condemns her again because of forged documents which he does not take the trouble to examine.

This dilettante's method of administering justice is the foundation of the plot. It is so artificial as to make everything else unreal.

Besides these faults in plot construction the tragedy suffers from the diction used by Moratín. The tone is one of hysterical excitement right through. Hormesinda complains as loudly about her forced marriage as she does about her unjust condemnation to death and Pelayo indulges in monologues of disheartening length.

Cadalso states that the classics were Moratín's model* and he points out the parallelism existing between the description in Act I of the victory of Pelayo with the passage in Virgil where Hector appears to Aeneas. Notwithstanding such resemblances, the style as a whole gives the impression of being a close imitation of the "style élevé" of the seventeenth century in France. As a matter of fact, the abuse of general terms is in part responsible for the inability of the characters to understand one another earlier in the play. What is more, certain phrases used most frequently would, by being translated literally, give good French expressions, most of them time-honored "chevilles" of the neo-classic drama of France.[144]

It was in part these defects and in part the undiscriminating dislike of the public for all productions claiming to be written in the observance of the rules that made Hormesinda a play doomed to failure.

Aranda tried in every way to insure the success of the play. He chose the best troops of actors and the hall of the treatre of the "Príncipe" was filled with partisans of the neo-classic movement. The play was performed for the first time on February 12, 1770, and met with scant success. It lingered for five days more and then was definitely abandoned.[145]

Cotarelo y Mori has published an anonymous letter which he found among the papers of Tomás de Iriarte and which is a judgment of the Hormesinda combined with an attack on Ramón de la Cruz. The author of the letter states concretely the purpose of his paper by quoting the lines in which an unknown pen made the author of the "Sainetes" say:

> No acertó Moratín en su Hormesinda,
> Ergo cuanto yo escribo es acertado.[146]

This criticism of the Hormesinda remarks, as we had done ourselves quite independently, on the weakness of the plot. It is of such a nature that "desde los principios del drama está previendo el auditorio que al instante que el héroe se tome el trabajo de escuchar á cualquiera de ellos

[144] F. Rousseau. Histoire du règne de Ch. III d'Esp., v. I, p. 362.
[145] F. Rousseau. Histoire du règne de Ch. III d'Esp., v. I, p. 362.
[146] Cotarelo y Mori, pp. 441 ff.

ha de desengañarse y que no se deshace el enredo desde la escene IV. del acto II. porque el poeta no quiere."

Next, the author of the letter remarks on the good quality of some of the verse—"hay versos tan buenos que si la Hormesinda fuera poema épico y no tragedia acreditarían el buen gusto de su autor." Unfortunately these good qualities are marred by the evidence of the grossest carelessness on the part of Moratín. "No quiero cansar á Vd. con acordarle las innumerables y uniformes exclamaciones que abundan en la tragedia como: "¡Ay Cielo Santo!" ¡Ay Dios! Ay triste! ¡Ay desdichada! Baste decir que un amigo mío que quiso divertirse en contar las veces que en ella se repite la interjeción ¡ay! perdio la cuenta y la paciencia." . . . To these marks of carelessness may be added one even greater, that of systematically filling in short verses by introducing adjectives in the superlative.

Bernardo Iriarte in his plan of reform already cited sums up all this criticism by saying that "Hormesinda" is a play containing five acts and 5,000 pieces of nonsense.[147]

The fate of Moratín's Hormesinda did not deter Cadalso from attempting to win success in the drama.

Cadalso. His "Sancho García."—On January 21, 1771, less than a year after the downfall of the Hormesinda, Cadalso presented to the public, through the agency of the theatre of "La Cruz," his regular tragedy entitled "Sancho García."

This tragedy was not the first one composed by the author. Prompted by his love for the famous actress, María Ignacia Ibáñez, he had already written a play entitled "Las Circasianas" but he had been unable to obtain the necessary printing permit and absolutely nothing is known about this work.

The performance of "Sancho García" took place under auspices even more favorable than those of "Hormesinda," for the faithful mistress of the author took the part of Doña Ava, but neither love nor genius could save Cadalso's tragedy from absolute failure. It was played only five days and during the last two the theatre was practically empty.

As in the case of Moratín's tragedy the plot was unsatisfactory while, in addition, the versification nowhere showed any particular charm. Cotarelo y Mori describes it as "insoportable á castellanos oídos" because of the monotony arising from the poet's attempt to imitate the French classic meter.[148]

A brief anaylsis of this play will prove that, as in the case of Hor-

[147] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 422.
[148] Cotarelo y Mori, p. 97.

mesinda, the public of Madrid had exercised excellent judgment in condemning it.

Doña Ava, the widowed countess of Castile, is deeply infatuated with Almanzor the Moorish ruler of Córdoba. The king, who knows of the lady's passion for him, proceeds to make use of this knowledge to further his own political ends. With amazing brutality and lack of diplomatic skill, he announces to his victim that the only way for her to secure his affection is by doing away with her only son, who, of course, is heir apparent to the throne of Castile.

Aleck, the favorite of Alomanzor, respectfully rebukes his master for his brutality and is promptly disgraced but the countess, rather than lose the privilege of her lover's presence, makes the plans necessary to the fulfillment of his will. The boy is to be poisoned during a banquet purported to be in the honor of the departing ruler.

The time for the banquet comes, but fortunately Don Gonzalo, the boy's squire, has learned of the plot through Doña Ava's "confidente" and besides the queen becomes disturbed at the crucial moment and drains the posset destined for her son. Don Gonzalo, as the expiring queen confesses her guilt, has Almanzor arrested but the Moor finds time to stab himself and to tell the queen that he never has had any love for her. As the two culprits perish, the public is admonished not to ignore the morality of the dreadful tale. . . .

> Venérese en castigo tan severo [149]
> El brazo de los cielos justiciero.

The language of the tragedy, although it is not distinctly rhythmic, is very clear but this good quality is not a sufficient compensation for the brutality of the theme and the incredible rigidity of the characters. Almanzor is a brute throughout; Aleck is the type of the perfect vassal; Doña Ava is an absolutely bad mother; Sancho, her son, is an admirable little being, perfect as son, perfect as prince.

Cadalso's Literary Criticism.—The complete failure of Cadalso as a tragic author is only the more disappointing from the fact that the ideas which he expresses concerning criticism are unusually keen and comprehensive. He is only one more illustration of the fact that critical power is by no means an assurance of success in original composition.

In Cadalso there is none of the rigidity and the fanaticism which make the critical writings of N. F. de Moratín so direct and so amusing. Cadalso is infinitely more supple and more intelligent than his friend. On last analysis, he sides with the neo-classic school but not to the extent

[149] Obras de Don José Cadahalso. 3 vols. Madrid, 1818. Sancho García. Tragedia Española original.

of being blinded to the weak and even ridiculous sides of the system. His admiration for the French school is not so great as to prevent him from seeking for weak points even in its masterpieces. Quoting the lines of Boileau's "Art Poétique" to which we have already referred, that is to the famous passage beginning "Un rimeur sans peril . . ." he adds [150] "Y aqui 'inter nos' digo en parte que no tiene razón y en parte que la tiene. No la tiene en decir 'un spectacle grossier' porque ya véis que esto no es buena crianza. . . ." After censuring Boileau he mildly reproaches Corneille for lack of Spanish local color in his "Cid" and when he comes to deal with Racine he plays that poet the mischievous trick of translating the monologue of Théramène in a way which emphasizes greatly those points of the discourse which he feels partake of the nature of Calderón's Gongorism. "Dije que en la tragedia intitulada Fedra de este autor había una relación muy parecida á las que se hablan en los dramas de Calderón y otros." After having put the monologue into "romancillo" verse and having made the most of Hippolytus's death and of the fabulous circumstances of the same, he adds, that with the proper actor "verá que no se distingue esto de una relación del 'Negro más prodigioso' ú otra semejante." [151]

This sly little attack on a French author of unquestioned excellence was merely a sort of pastime. The bulk of his criticism is directed against the national school or against those of his countrymen who have given themselves the title of literary critics without possessing either sufficient natural judgment or adequate preparation to fulfill the delicate tasks expected from those who really belong to that profession. He blames those poets of his own day who, in spite of the teaching which had made the eighteenth century famous, "mueren todavía, digámoslo así de la misma peste de que pocos escaparon entonces. Varios oradores y poetas de estos días parece que no son sino sombras ó almas de los que murieron cien años ha." [152] Following this statement which he puts in the mouth of the main speaker of his "Cartas Marruecas" he quotes a number of extravagant titles of books and of comedies which have appeared since the year 1751 "cuando ya era creíble que se hubiera acabado toda hinchazon y pedantería." [153]

Continuing his disquisition on Boileau's fling at the Spanish stage, he shows his agreement on the whole with the opinion of the French critic by describing at large and in witty language a typical "comedia" of

[150] Cadalso, v. I, p. 144.
[151] Cadalso, v. I, p. 146.
[152] Cadalso, v. I, p. 156.
[153] Cartas Marruecas, No. LXXVII, p. 311, v. III.

the eighteenth century decadence. This description is surely worth quoting in full. "No peyno canas, gracias á Dios, y me acuerdo haber visto una comedia famosa, (así lo decía el cartel) en que el Cardenal Cisneros con todas sus reverendas iba de Madrid á Orán y volvía de Orán á Madrid en un abrir y cerrar de ojos; allí había ángeles y diablos, cristianos y moros, mar y corte, Africa y Europa, etc., y bajaba Santiago en su caballo blanco y daba cuchilladas al aire matando tanto perro moro que era un consuelo para mí y para todo buen soldado cristiano; por señas que se descalzó un angelón de madera de los de la comitiva del campeón celeste y por poco mata medio patio lleno de christianos viejos que estábamos con las bocas abiertas, no pareciéndonos bastantes los ojos para ver tanta cosa como allí veíamos con estos ya dichos ojos que han de comer los gusanos de la tierra." [154]

Bad critics receive many cuts from the swift lash of our poet and satirist. In the "Cartas Marruecas" he compares them to mad bulls which in their rage destroy everything about them, losing their own lives in the process.[155] "Solo se valen de una especie de instinto que les queda para hacer daño á todos cuantos se les presenten y sea amigo ó enemigo, débil ó fuerte, inocente ó culpado."

In the "Eruditos á la Violeta," a series of pamphlets directed against the multitude of the small minds who have learned the phraseology of the rationalistic movement but have not caught a spark of the spirit which made it a respectable form of thought, he defines the function of the true critic in society: "La crítica es, digámoslo así, la policía de la República literaria. Es la que inspecciona lo bueno y lo malo que se introduce en su dominio . . . debieran ser unos sujetos de conocido talento . . . pero sería corto el número de los candidatos para tan apreciable empleo." [156] After this he proceeds to flay the neo-classic rabble together with those who with equal lack of talent and good faith are opposed to neo-classicism. "Primero, despreciad todo lo antiguo, ó todo lo moderno; escoged uno de estos dictámenes y seguidle sistemáticamente; pero las voces modernas y antiguas no tengan en nuestros labios sentido determinado; no fixéis jamás la época de la muerte ó nacimiento de lo bueno ni de lo malo. . . . Segundo, con igual discernimiento escogeréis entre nuestra literatura y la extrangera. Si es más natural escogéis todo lo extrangero . . . escoged cuatro libros. . . . Franceses que hablan de nosotros peor que de los negros de Angola . . . y aun haced caer lluvias de sangre sobre todas las obras cuyos autores hayan tenido la grande y

[154] Cartas Marruecas, No. LXXVII, p. 311, v. III.
[155] Cartas Marruecas, v. I, p. 99.
[156] Cartas Marruecas.

nunca bastante llorada desgracia de ser paisanos de los Sénecas, Quintilianos, Marciales,[157] etc."

In another portion of his work, Cadalso anticipates L. F. de Moratín, describing the type of the pedant which we are to meet later in this study in the "Siege of Vienna." "No obstante citad á Eurípides, Sóphocles, Séneca, Terencio y Plauto, y una pieza de cada uno. Con esto y con repetir á menudo las palabras del conjuro, unidad, prólogo, catástrophe, episodio, escena, acto etc. . . . os tendrán por pozos de ciencia poético-trágico-cómico-grecolatina . . . y pobre del autor que saque su pieza al público sin vuestra aprobación." [158] This is the jargon of the "fruits secs" of the neo-classic movement. We shall recognize its gibberish in the second act of the "Comedia Nueva."

More quotations could be made. They would only make still more evident the conclusion that, though Cadalso failed as a playwright, he had unusual gifts as a critic and that he stated in a brilliant manner what there was in neo-classicism which could benefit the literature of his country and what was merely deadening rationalism and pedantry.

The third important member of the Tertulia de San Sebastián was Don Tomás de Iriarte who, though inferior as a lyric poet to either Moratín or Cadalso, surpassed both in learning and in the art of writing prose.

Tomás de Iriarte.—Tomás de Iriarte, leaving the Canary Islands at an early age, had come to Madrid to study under the guidance of his uncle Juan de Iriarte, who was the director of the royal library. This learned humanist had given his nephew a sound education based on the classics and had instilled in him the principles which he himself had learned during his years of study in Rouen and in Paris. The schoolmate of Voltaire at the lycée "Louis le Grand," and the former contributor to the "Diario de los Literatos" could not fail to bring up his nephew in the fear of the rules and in the love of literary regularity.

This education bore early fruits. When only nineteen, Tomás de Iriarte began his many translations for the royal theatres created by Aranda and a year later in 1770 he composed his first regular play entitled "Hacer que hacemos." Cotarelo y Mori says of it that its principal character, a man who, while always in a mad rush, never accomplishes anything, is so overdrawn that even the excellent qualities of the versification could not save the comedy from failure. As a matter of fact, in spite of the author's efforts, the comedy was never played.

The first classic manifesto of Iriarte was his "Literatos en Cuares-

[157] Cartas Marruecas, v. I, p. 99.
[158] Cartas Marruecas, v. I, p. 33.

ma," a set of pamphlets more or less in imitation of Cadalso's "Eruditos á la Violeta" and published a year later in 1773.

There was to be a series of discourses on literary and philosophical subjects. Theophrastus, Cicero, Cervantes, Boileau, Pope and Tasso were to speak in turns. Only two essays were actually written but they are sufficient to give us a clear idea of the young author's attitude towards the neo-classic rules. He adopts them reverentially and completely. He differs from Moratín and from Cadalso in the greater clearness and dignity with which he expresses his literary faith. Furthermore he brings in an element which is distinctly his own—he can not insist too much upon the necessity of using pure Castilian: "sobre todo un castellano correcto, sin versos duros ni arrastrados, y sin mezcla de galicismos, de que Dios nos libre por su amor y misericordia."

It stands to reason that this well trained humanist looked upon the French school not as a movement to be followed because it was French, but because he saw in it the purest modern manifestation of the spirit of the Ancients. He did not hesitate as between Boileau and Horace. To help the neo-classic movement he published in 1777 the "Arte Poética." With the publication of this work begins that series of literary quarrels which were to embitter the life of Iriarte and to lessen his usefulness as a writer by taking too much of his best thought and energy.

The few words that we need to say about these matters are taken entirely from the work of Cotarelo y Mori on Iriarte where these quarrels are studied in detail.

Sedano, the editor of the compilation known as "El Parnaso Español," was offended by some slighting remarks made by Iriarte in the preface of the "Arte Poética." The editor, who was not a man of any great learning, made himself ridiculous by his criticism of Iriarte's translation and drew upon his head the dialogue entitled "Donde las dan las toman." This dialogue is a model of fluid and flexible prose, which made short work of Sedano's vituperative attack.

Iriarte first meets easily the absurd objections of his enemy by proving beyond the possibility of a doubt that Sedano did not know Latin and then he proceeds to ridicule his neo-classic tragedy entitled "Jahel." This work was written according to Montiano's recipe and exhibited the worst traits of the stillborn neo-classic tragedies of Spain. Exterior correctness could not save the "Jahel" from the sarcastic yet correctly expressed flings of Iriarte whose "Traductor" in his conversation with "Don Justo" takes great pleasure in counting the lines of the series of monologues which form the tragedy. "Y ahora añado que no es comoquiera fría, sino helada, garapiñada y acarambanada y que de ella digo y diré por las demostradas razones lo que sin demostrar las suyas, dijo

de mi traducción el Señor Sedano; conviene á saber que es 'dilatadísima, difusísima y redundantísima'." The dialogue ends with mocking remarks on the diction of Sedano and on the many absurdities contained in the "Parnaso Español."

Iriarte's Literary Fables.—But after all these matters, except in so far as they deal with the "Jahel," do not directly concern us. Let us pass to that part of Iriarte's work which bears most clearly the stamp of his genius, namely his fables.

It has been said that the "Fábulas Literarias" constitute a complete art of poetry. This statement is of course an exaggeration but the fact remains that the most important points of the neo-classic system are discussed in the fables, which at the same time allude to the more salient facts of the neo-classic quarrel in Spain during the eigheenth century.

In his first fable Iriarte represents the elephant speaking to his subjects about sundry censurable practices which are going on among them. Those among his listeners who have committed no faults listen with equanimity, but the tiger, the wolf, the snake, the fox, the whole tribe of the brutal or the perverse, either leave in anger or sneer at the speaker, who concludes with these words:

"A todos y á ninguno
Mis advertencias tocan;
Quien las siente se culpa:
El que no que las oiga."

Iriarte taking the floor after the last words of the elephant, concludes by assuring his reader that there will be no direct attack either against specific times or against individuals in the fables which are to follow:

"Quien haga aplicaciones
Con su pan se lo coma."

We shall see later that Iriarte does not keep absolutely his promise of dealing impersonally with generalities but the fact remains that many of his fables teach such very general truths that it is sometimes difficult to connect them even distantly with the neo-classic system. To this type belongs the story of the drones who, ashamed of their idleness, organize a fine funeral ceremony for a queen bee long since dead, thus rivaling those writers who, unable to write themselves, impotently praise the great men of the past. The value of pompous silence is illustrated by the apologue of the little bell which by being tolled only on great occasions won for itself as much respect as its mighty sister in the belfry of the cathedral whose function it was to usher in only important feast days. Again there is nothing strictly neo-classical in the fable attacking

the writers who style themselves such because of a few prefaces composed about the works of others nor in the one in which the duck is made to boast of his three modes of locomotion only to be sharply reminded by the snake that he excels in none.

These and many others illustrating the influence of nationality and friendship in criticism, the errors of hyper-criticism, the incompatibility of venality with true talent are indeed so self-evident and so general in the conclusions to which they point, that Iriarte's enemies did not fail to make use of them to brand the whole collection of fables as altogether futile and platitudinous.

On the other hand, some of Iriarte's apologues are so distinctly neo-classical in the truth they wish to teach that passages paralleling them can be found in regular neo-classic treatises. The fable of the hired mule which starts at a rapid pace but soon becomes exhausted and being urged by its rider tumbles ignominiously to the ground contains the well known warning of Boileau against high sounding beginnings:

"N'allez pas dés l'abord sur Pégase monté
Crier à vos lecteurs d'une voix de tonnerre
Je chante le vainqueur des vainqueurs de la terre."

Such a boisterous start bears the promise of a humiliating fall. Iriarte sounds the same note of warning, and for the sake of those who might not have grasped the allegorical meaning of the mule and its fall, he adds:

"Despues de este lance en viendo
Que un autor ha principiado
Con altisonante estruendo
Al punto digo: '¡Cuidado!'
¡Tente hombre! que te has de ver
En el vergonzoso estado
De la mula de alquiler."

Nearly the same idea recurs in the fable of the dog who gave up a spit-wheel for a water-wheel hoping thus to obtain greater glory and more food.

"Lo mismo he leido yo
En un tal Horacio Flacco
Que á un autor da por gran yerro
Cargar con lo que después
No podrá llevar; esto es
Que no ande la noria el perro."

There is no treatise on the rules which does not urge the author to keep before his mind some useful purpose which will give his work a "raison d'être." Iriarte preaches this dogma by means of his lively tale

dealing with the squirrel and the colt. The rodent makes a loud boast about his nimbleness, giving to understand that he is superior to the colt. The latter who is being put through his paces stops just long enough to remark that his activity is of service to his master whereas the gyrations of the squirrel benefit no one.

"Conque algunos escritores
Ardillas tambien serán
Si en obras frívolas gastan
Todo el calor natural."

That perfection in art is attained only when the useful and the agreeable are made to mingle goes back of course to Horace. Iriarte's version of it is to be found in the fable which describes the sad predicament of a gardener whose duty it was to water some flowers from a basin in which lived some trout and in which there was so little water that drawing any from it endangered the life of the fish. The master wanted the beauty of the blossoms and the prospect of a good meal. Iriarte does not tell us how the poor gardener avoided the horns of his dilemma but he concludes bravely with these words:

"La Máxima es trillada
Mas repetirse debe.
Si al pleno acierto aspiras
Une la utilidad con el deleite."

This exhausts the unconditionally neo-classic teachings of the Fables. A large number of them refer to conditions and ideas peculiar to Spain. For instance the principle, old as the "Arte Nuevo de hacer comedias," that the common people are to be the final judges, receives many a blow. A trained bear after performing an awkward step asked the monkey what he thought of it. "Yours was a wretched performance," replies the monkey, but the hog, who was overhearing this conversation, bursts into noisy praise of the bear's gracefulness. The latter, who was about to take offense at the frankness of the monkey, now takes thought unto himself and concludes:

"Cuando me desaprobaba
La mona llegué á dudar,
Mas ya que el cerdo me alaba
Muy mal debo de bailar.
Guarde para su regalo
Esta sentencia un autor
Si el sabio no aprueba ¡malo!
Si el necio aplaude ¡peor!"

This very same idea, which is at once a refutation of Lope's principle and an attack on Ramón de la Cruz, is to be found also in the apologue

of the donkey which was fed entirely on straw. "He eats it with relish," said the master to excuse himself. "Give me grain," replied the abused quadruped, "and you will see whether I eat it or not."

"Sepa quien para el público trabaja
Que tal vez á la plebe culpa en vano
Pues si en dándole paja come paja
Siempre que la dan grano come grano."

"El burro flautista," who by accident blows into a flute in such a way as to give a harmonious sound, the apologue of the flint and the steel, the one about the tight-rope walker, who discarded his balancing pole, a fable made popular in France by Florian, all are meant to prove that natural talent without diligent application and knowledge of the rules is of no avail; this again is an attack against the school of Lope.

Góngorism is condemned in the rather long drawn out story of the monkey who tried to exhibit stereopticon views without having thought of lighting the lantern:

"¿Os puedo yo decir con mejor modo
Que sin la claridad os falta todo?"

Likewise the neo-classic pedants, the bad critics, the writers of gallicized Castilian, all are dealt with in one or more apologues.

A few fables, in spite of the promise twice repeated in the first one of the series, are either defenses of the author or personal attacks against his enemies. When the turkey instead of flying a race with the crow, as he had agreed to do, calls his opponent a black and disgusting carrion feeder, Iriarte concludes:

"Cuando en las obras del sabio
No encuentra defectos
Contra la persona cargos
Suela hacer el necio."

and the reader can not but recall the many literary quarrels of the fabulist which ended so often in the basest personal insults. In the XXXIXth fable Iriarte's intention is to reach Valdés who, in the opinion of the critic, made too great a use of archaic terms.* The fable emphasizing the need of relentless criticism, from time to time, may be an attempt at self-justification for the author's treatment of García de la Huerta, the brilliant and unfortunate author of the "Raquel," who died while still young because of the combination of governmental persecutions and the satires of Moratín, Iriarte and their group.

Such is the subject matter of the fables of Iriarte. By the cleverness of the dialogues, the neatness of the expressions and the pleasant variety

of the rhythms employed they have won for their author a fame as widespread as it is well deserved.*

Following close upon the publication of the fables, came the brutal and unwarranted onslaught of Forner, together with the less blameworthy but equally unfair attack by the fabulist Samaniego in dealing with whom Iriarte had not been sufficiently prudent.* As in the case of the quarrel with Sedano, the best we can do is to pass rapidly over these events which do not belong clearly to our field of study. Samaniego had a purely French education, his attack on Iriarte was the result of personal pique, and as for Forner, in whom Menéndez y Pelayo would see a fearless defender of the purely Spanish ideals, it is but too clear, after the study of these quarrels made by Cotarelo y Mori, that he was a barefaced opportunist, a kind of literary "spadassin," a man ready to strike any one at any time if there was any promise in these blows of either personal advancement or the satisfaction of envy. The man who attacked at once Iriarte, García de la Huerta, Triego, and Valdés can not for a moment be thought to have been a person of character and with an honest purpose. Neither "El Asno Erudito" nor the libel entitled "Los Gramáticos—historia chinesca" can be considered for a moment as fair representatives of the spirit of loyal opposition to the neo-classic attitude of mind and therefore they have no place in this study.

Iriarte's Plays.—The honor of producing the first successful regular play was to fall to Iriarte. In 1788 he gave to the public his comedy entitled "El Señorito Mimado." In a letter addressed to Enrique Ramos, dated 1779, Iriarte stated that he had completely given up going to the theatre. "Esta diversión me está rigurosamente prohibida por la religión de Horacio que profeso . . . no se necesita ir á la luneta con peligro de que se me acede la comida." . . . His religion of Horace caused him to create the character of "El Señorito Mimado" and the play bearing such a title succeeded before the Madrid public in spite of its rigorous observance of the unities, its clearly discernible moral purpose, its comparative simplicity of plot and the qualities of verisimilitude illustrated in the delineation of its characters.

The play had the good fortune of being represented by able actors at the theatre of "La Cruz" and Iriarte scored a complete success.

Having shown the need of discipline in a young man's education, Iriarte undertook to write a play which would be a criticism of a young girl whose home training had been deficient. Through the lack of discipline in her bringing up, she becomes involved in a love affair with a rascal; her punishment comes about when she is made to recognize the true character of her lover.

This comedy, like its predecessor, met with the hearty approval of the critics but it had the misfortune of being entrusted to the company of "El Príncipe," and the hostility of the mob together with the lack of skill or the ill-will of the actors caused the partial failure of the play. It lasted but a few days among the jeers and stormy interruptions of the mob and then its place was taken by " 'El buen hijo,' 'Aragón restaurado,' 'La Toma de Milán,' y otros monstruos y delirios dictados por la barbarie."

This comedy was the last widely known play of Iriarte, who died the next year without having been able to publish his comedy "El Don de Gentes," in which was depicted the character of a perfect young woman. The "zarzuela" which was to follow the comedy, anticipated L. F. de Moratín's "Don Eleuterio" in the person of the "Licenciado" who had composed a tragedy, the title of which, quoted by Cotarelo y Mori, is worth quoting again. It runs thus:

> Leucomelania
> la blanca del cuerpo negro
> reina de Monomotapa,
> por otro título: "Honor
> amor, valor, y venganza;
> vivir muerta y morir viva
> y escándalo de la Arabia."
> Vale el título una escena.

By his solid scholarship, by his sound judgment and by his clearness of thought, Tomás de Iriarte did more than any other man of his group to give neo-classicism a firm foundation in Spain. He gave to the party of regularity the authority which the more brilliant but less reliable qualities of Moratín and Cadalso had supplied insufficiently. The thoroughness of his scholarship proved to be an antidote to the weakening of the shallow criticism of journalists. Iriarte was the best representative of the rules since Luzán and he prepared royally the road on which Moratín the younger was to triumph.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V.

P. 96. Clavijo y Fajardo was born in 1730; he died in 1806. Beside being editor of "El Pensador" he directed the publication of the "Mercurio de Madrid." From 1785-1790 he translated Buffon's works. He is remembered especially for his shameful conduct toward Beaumarchais's sister. Beaumarchais's "Eugénie" and Goethe's "Clavijo" are based on this episode.

P. 98. Bourgoing. Nouv. Voyage, v. I, p. 230. Describes one of these, "Le Théâtre du Buen Retiro est encore parfaitement conservé; la salle est petite

mais dessinée avec art. Le Théâtre qui est vaste s'ouvre dans le fond sur les jardins du Palais avec lesquels il est de niveau, ce qui favorisait souvent la magie théâtrale, en étendant la perspective à perte de vue, en permettant le déploiement de corps de troupes et même quelques fois la marche de la cavalerie. Toutes ces illusions se sont évanouies, la salle est deserte . . ."

P. 98. A list of French plays translated into Spanish and represented on the royal stage of which Clavijo was director is given by Cotarelo y Mori, pp. 69-70, and foot-notes.

P. 100. N. F. de Moratín's "Desengaños," etc., are clearly inspired by the foreword to the reader in Luzán's "Poética." "Y primeramente te advierto que no desestimes como novedad las reglas . . . te aseguro que nada tienen que esso; pues ha mil años que estas mismas reglas (á lo menos en todo lo substancial y fundamental) ya estaban escritas por Aristóteles y luego successivemente epilogadas por Horacio, comentadas por muchos sabios y eruditos Varones, divulgadas entre todas las naciones cultas y generalmente aprobadas y seguidas. Mira, si tendrás razón para decir, que son opiniones nuevas las que peinan tantas canas. Añade, ahora que en la práctica y en la realidad aun les puedo dar más antiguedad, siéndome muy fácil de probar, que todo lo que se funda en razón es tan antiguo, como la razón misma y siendo ésta hija del discurso humano vendrá á ser con poca distancia su coetánea."

P. 103. Eruditos á la Violeta, Supplemento al papel intitulado, etc., p. 115. Also, v. III, p. 190. "Ocios de mi juventud. Al estilo magnífico de Don N. F. de Moratín en sus composiciones heróicas." Again v. I. Eruditos, etc., p. 115. Cadalso speaks of Moratín, "á quién estimo tanta como á poeta (y no á la violeta) como quanto á amigo (tampoco á la violeta)."

P. 113. Juan Meléndez Valdés, 1754-1817, friend of Jovellanos and the best lyric poet of his time, head of the so-called "School of Salamanca."

P. 114. The "Mercurio Peruano"—published by the "Sociedad Académica de Amantes de Lima," 1791—shows how widely the fame of the fables extended. Its various volumes are sprinkled with "Fábulas Literarias," notably v. IV, p. 59. "Contra los que no entienden una Obra, critican la parte que la hace más recomendable," p. 89. "Contra los Escritores que aparentando mucha pompa en los frontispicios de sus obras no desempeñan lo que prometen."

P. 114. Samaniego—Selections by Apraiz, p. 57. "Desde que el grán número de obras buenas y la declinación del mal gusto en algunas partes de la Europa han inspirado á tantos escritores el proyecto de ser leídos a fuerza de extravagancias es preciso confesar que nada se ha imaginado tan raro como el poner en fábulas el Arte Poética de Horacio. . . . Esta idea es, sobre poco más ó menos, la misma que tuvo aquel buen hombre, que quiso poner en madrigales la Historia Romana."

CHAPTER VI.

Leandro Fernández de Moratín. His Contribution to the Neo-Classic Movement. His Struggle with the Illiterate Classes.

While Iriarte was still in his prime, the man who was to continue his work and that of the literary group which we have been studying had already attracted attention by a piece of writing dealing with neo-classic criticism. In 1782 Leandro F. de Moratín had presented his "Satire" to compete for the prize offered by the Academy.

The Nature of L. F. de Moratín's Thought.—It may be well at this point to state once for all that neither in this work nor in any other of this author are we to find any new or original forms of thought. If it was true that the elder Moratín could not have added any new principles to those expounded by Luzán and by the Academy of Good Taste, it was still more true of his son who came at a moment when these principles had just been stated for the third time. This inability to state anything new however was not necessarily a source of weakness. Of the countless commentators of Aristotle, which one had brought any new element of thought to the close-knit system of dramatic rules since its first detailed discussions by Scaliger and by Castelvetro? Originality in such matters consists in the ability to state the well worn arguments in a way which will appeal to the public which they are meant to reach. Luzán's exposition had been successful, since the "Poética" had awakened the interest of scholars in such matters; N. F. de Moratín, Cadalso and Iriarte by using a more popular form had created among the middle class a strong party in favor of the rules. The true glory of L. F. de Moratín lies in the fact that not only did he complete the conversion of the middle class, but that he succeeded in bringing to terms, at least for a time, the very unruly third estate which filled the "patio" of the playhouses.

Since his mission was to restate the principles which he had received from others, it can not be said that there is any evolution in Moratín's thought. The principles at the base of his writings had been given him from the very start; he received them unquestioningly; life and success could not make him a firmer believer in their excellence. At the same time, just as his predecessors had done, he did not permit poorly informed foreigners to criticize the masterpieces of Spanish lit-

erature. From the beginning to the end of his life, he urged his countrymen along lines of reason and good sense in literary matters and he defended the better writers of his country against foreign criticism. A sincere faith in the usefulness of his mission and resourcefulness in his method of exposition were his main strength. The very nature of the controversy which he carried on to a successful end militated against any great development of his imagination, and his writings are praiseworthy because of the intellectual poise they exhibit and because of their symmetry of form, but they lack variety of theme.

Moratín cast his thought in five different moulds. We have already referred to his first important composition, his "Satire against the vices introduced into Castilian poetry" presented to the Spanish Academy. A survey of this work will introduce us to the main arguments which Moratín was to repeat in his writings dealing with literary criticism.*

Moratín's Satire.—The satire takes the form of a long discourse to one Fabius who, late in life and without having given signs of literary ability, begins to compose verse.[159] It would be better if he were to limit his activities to the handling of the plough, the hoe or the weeding hook but since he persists in his mistaken ambition and turns yellow with rage at these introductory words, Moratín is going to show him how he may succeed in writing something and he is going to describe the kind of compositions which are sure to come from his pen.[160]

First of all, by dint of hard work, he can surely write verse to his Filis or to his Marfisa describing her charms in Gongoristic style. He can tell her that her indifference is a snow which sets his heart on fire, that her forehead is a resplendent plain, her brows a curved lute or sweet bows piercing him with cruel arrows. If his own inventive power does not suffice to describe the state of his enamored soul, let him say with Quevedo that restless it swims over seas of ardent and pure light amidst a curly tempest of wavy gold.[161]

It may be that the fair one will throw all these beautiful and striking stanzas out of the window but such an act on her part will only serve to give abundant opportunity for more Gongorism and for lengthy appeals to nymphs and shepherds.

Let not his ambition stop there, however, for what will it avail him to be able to write in the quiet of his study if he does not gain skill in expressing himself extemporaneously? Let him pluck up courage and heap pun on pun, extravagance on extravagance, mingling bitter satire

[159] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 108.
[160] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 108.
[161] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 108.

with it all. Such nonsense when put into print will find favor with the public who will eagerly buy the tomes containing it.[162]

There are still other ways for the would-be lyric poet to insure success. He may fall back on the rich mine of the mythological figures of speech, he may turn to gallicized syntax or revert to archaisms.

The epic may be brought into his field as easily as lyric poetry. To succeed in this genre let him break all narrow rules and, filled with sacred fury, let his initial verses be so altisonant and horrible as to win immediately the attention of the reader. What is to follow may be written with a view to respecting faithfully historical truth. Let there be dates, names of battles and plenty of them.

Such a course, however, will give the rage of critics plenty of material on which to satisfy itself. It would undoubtedly be safer for the writer to adopt the opposite course and let his imagination run riot, to have heroic deeds, single combats, giants, enchanted armors, the whole of history, millions of episodes, sorcerers, magic ointments, all the subject matter of Ariosto and of the romances of chivalry including flying chariots taking the hero the world over. Above all, do not forget the crystal globe in which the hero's noble descendants appear, thus affording the author a capital chance to flatter his literary patron.[163]

It would be idle to hope that even such a course could check the evil tongues of critics. They will exclaim: O! deplorable facility! Reason and taste must control the imagination or else nothing worth while can be accomplished. The country's reputation suffers from such irregularities. Spain arrogantly disdained the humble simplicity of the Greeks and of the Latins. She gave her comedy an emphatic and obscure style, she disregarded moral teaching. Spain's plays bring together on the stage all social classes from high Church dignitaries to buffoons; the plots dealt with cover centuries, have dozens of actions and carry the spectator from Ghent to Florence to end finally in the sands of the Sahara or amidst the fumes of Hell.

Thus speaking the raging critic pounds with his fists and leaves his seat in an outburst of anger. "All this, Fabius, is pure jealousy; do not heed such words. No matter what critics may say, you are assured of fame and wealth if you follow my methods. Be of good cheer. Write forthwith seven comedies, have fifteen printed, plan nineteen more, give your venal muse no rest. What the critics call faults are qualities which will fill your purse and assure you a place on high Helicon."

"Only, Fabius, when Apollo in the presence of the nine muses

[162] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 111.
[163] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 122.

crowns your brow with his sacred hands, remember your debt to me who have directed your steps on the road to so much glory." [164]

From this synopsis it appears that the "Satire" contains only few ideas. It attacks facility, it ridicules obscurity and bad taste in style, it makes a plea for verisimilitude in the facts treated, simplicity in action and morality in purpose. Variously combined and illustrated, these six points are the skeleton of the poem. These same points are the foundation of the literary arguments met with in the "Comedia Nueva," and in the "Discourse on the Origins of the Drama in Spain." With additions inspired by the writings of Samuel Johnson, they form the subject matter of the notes to the translation of Hamlet.* They also appear, in part, in his comedies not dealing exclusively with criticism and the "Derrota de los Pedantes" is an attack against uncontrolled facility in writing.

Before undertaking the work just mentioned, Moratín had composed his comedy entitled "El Viejo y la Niña." He tried in 1786 to have the play staged but at that time "el Señorito Mimado" had not yet been represented, and the younger author discovered that his efforts, unaided, were not sufficient to overcome the old prejudices against neo-classic compositions. In none of the Madrid theatres could he find capable actors willing to introduce a play so uneventful in plot and so simple in diction. Furthermore he was unable to obtain the necessary permission from the government. There was nothing for him to do but turn once more to the field of criticism, since the times were not yet ripe for successful presentation of regular plays. This disappointment was followed by the writing of the "Derrota de los Pedantes."

This essay, as we stated above, was meant to ridicule especially that deplorable facility in turning out large amounts of either prose or verse which had grown enormously in a country where the rich national imagination had never been submitted to any discipline.

La Derrota de los Pedantes.—This work, by its setting, reminds one slightly of Boileau's "Les Héros de Roman." As French novels were castigated under the fiction of a rebellion of the infernal regions against Pluto, so the Spanish author lashes the too prolific writers of his country by having them attempt to storm the heights of Parnassus, thus compelling Apollo to use force to repulse the unexpected onslaught.

An innumerable army composed of bad poets, bad critics, and, worst of all, of writers of bad plays, has in spite of Luzán's efforts swarmed into the court of Apollo's palace.[165] They are actually doing battle with the elect of Parnassus who have been taken completely by surprise. Apollo is aroused in all haste from his midday nap and Mercury tells

[164] L. F. de M., v. IV, pp. 125-134.
[165] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 8.

him that the rage of the mob comes from the fact that each one of its members wants the honor of being chosen to sing the glories to come of the incipient reign of Charles IV.

To obtain more accurate information about the nature of the disturbance, Mercury flies over the mob of fighting authors, picks one up at random and after a swift flight upwards locks him up in a small garret. Returning soon with orders from Apollo, Mercury finds that his wretched prisoner has already composed two pastoral poems, a madrigal and three sonnets, so much verse being needed to express his dismay at his treatment at the hands of the messenger of the gods.

The captive poet is soon brought into the presence of Apollo. He forthwith sets himself to relating with pride that he is the author of twenty-three comedies, nine "follas," five tragedies, two "loas," fifty "saynetes," four hundred sonnets and three epic poems which are in themselves complete encyclopedias. He adds that he has annotated Góngora and translated Huerta's prologue.[166]

Apollo, enraged by such tiresome glibness, orders that the poet be thrown into Tartarus. The nine muses, always tender-hearted, do their best to pacify their angry ruler and this gives their protégé the necessary time to compose a poem intended to placate Tesifone, the least ill-favored of the Furies. Temporarily pacified, Apollo orders him to state what he expects to receive from him. The poet, after making a statement concerning the deplorable condition of the members of his profession who, in spite of their immense productivity, are allowed to starve, begs the god to grant him a manner of diploma of poetic efficiency which may once for all protect him and his compeers against the envious attacks of critics. Such a request does not fail to arouse Apollo's ire again. He deplores loudly the state of affairs in Spain where the ignorant are forever writing while the learned and the wise remain inactive, where all things foreign are scorned with the exception of bad books which find eager translators.

After this attack on the evils of the day, the god speaks regretfully of the Golden Age and of its great authors, ending his tirade with a statement to the effect that these men who have just attempted to storm Parnassus are in no way qualified to sing the nation's hopes at the coronation of a new ruler. Let them be gone and if they wish for mercy after such a show of impudence, let them be silent, silent forevermore.

The spokesman of the pedants is hurled back to his own party and Apollo harangues the unruly company. The gist of his discourse is that men are in duty bound to work; that few are chosen who may attain

[166] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 19.

knowledge. Let them go back to their affairs and under no circumstance lay hand to pen or book.

Far from taking such sound advice in a spirit of meekness, the pedants became infuriated and compel the gods to take violent measures of repression.

Helped by Mendoza, Garcilaso, and all the other elects among Spanish authors, the ruler of Parnassus succeeds in driving back the incapable writers by hurling at them huge tomes of writings as wretched as their own. A lull occurs in the battle and Mercury takes that opportunity to advise the already weakened rebels to elect a few spokesmen who will carry on such negotiations as may be wise.

This proposition is only a trick on the part of the wily messenger of the gods for, no sooner have the poets proceeded to hold some form of election than they come to blows. Each pedant wants to be elected. Confusion is made complete by internal strife, and new volleys of missiles are showered from the ranks of the enemy. Not books this time, but tables, chairs, streams of hot water scatter the invaders once for all. Of the few who are made prisoners, some are set free but most of them are found to be so incurably insane that they have to be locked up in cages where they are to remain naked and wretched.[167]

In 1790, the year following the publication of the "Derrota," Moratín made one more effort to have his first comedy represented and this time the gates which Iriarte had forced open two years before allowed Moratín's comedy to pass through. In the preface of the play,[168] the author tells us that four years after his first attempt and subsequent failure the censors could find only matter for praise in his comedy. They applauded its moral purpose, the regularity of its plot, the realistic rendering of the characters, its style of versification, everying in short.

The play was given on the 22d of May, 1790, and the public received it graciously.

This success scored by Moratín did not mean however that the struggle for the recognition of neo-classicism had resulted in a final victory for the reforming party. Though the resistance of the middle class had practically ceased, the fate of plays still lay in the hands of the opposition, for no censor's license could protect a work against the whims of the majority of the public, that is to say against the common people who filled the pit and were, after all, the only serious financial backers of the Spanish theatres in the eighteenth century.[169] We saw how "La Señorita mal criada" had fallen before those plebeian judges who, with

[167] L. F. de M., v. IV, p. 32.

[168] L. F. de M., v. II, pp. 4 ff.

[169] L. F. de M., Prologue to v. II, p. xiii.

much more reason, had brought about the downfall of the plays attempted by N. F. de Moratín and by Cadalso.*

Mob Rule and the Stage.—These relentless foes of neo-classicism had been established in their noisy and destructive prerogatives by long years of undisputed control over theatrical matters. Two hundred years of adulation by playwrights had made them firm believers in the soundness of their own literary judgment. To quote L. F. de Moratín, "Genius and no rules" [170] had become their motto and we know to what form of intellectual depravity they had come to apply the term genius.*

We have seen at the beginning of this study that the court of Philip V had had no influence on the Spanish stage and we must remember that the reign of Philip V lasted nearly half a century. Ferdinand VI did have a playhouse at court but it had been devoted entirely to the presentation of elaborate operas performed by Italians.

It is true that at various times under Philip V attempts had been made to improve the material conditions of the stage in Madrid. In 1738 Elizabeth Farnese had directed that the playhouse called "De los Caños del Peral" should be redecorated. In 1743 and 1745 some improvements had been made to the theatre of "La Cruz" and to that of "El Principe." Such slight material improvements in no way affected the kind of plays staged and the buildings continued to be rather crude affairs consisting of a stage in an open court surrounded by wooden galleries so located as to leave an ample pit.[171]

We have already seen how, under Charles III, Aranda had instituted reforms of a more serious character. Thanks to his patronage, plays that were not purely Spanish in character had been performed in spite of popular opposition. Finally opposition had weakened and a time had come when the Madrid mob was fairly willing to hear either translations of neo-classic plays or neo-classic adaptations of old Spanish "comedias." This unprecedented graciousness on the part of the mob was only skin-deep. We saw that Iriarte's second play fell because it did not satisfy the dramatic ideals of the audience in the "patio." Triego* and Valdés, as formerly the elder Moratín and Cadalso, were condemned by the same judges. After Aranda, as before his day, the mob held the fate of plays in its hands. At times, as in the case of the "Hormesinda," it displayed a great deal of good sense while more often its judgments arose directly from ignorance or from national prejudice. In spite of the growing willingness of censors to grant printing and playing permits, the "Chorizos" at the "Principe" and "Polacos" at the "Cruz" still held the future

[170] L. F. de M., v. II, p. xiv.
[171] L. F. de M., v. II, p. xiii.

of all plays in their power. They were more lenient to be sure than they had been before the days of Aranda but the fact remained that they still were the only all-powerful authority on matters of dramatic excellence. That power could not be wrested from them since, as we have already remarked, the financial success of theatrical companies depended on them alone. What could be done was to attempt to educate them just as their social betters had been educated. Moratín, with keen insight into the nature of the conditions surrounding the stage, came to the conclusion that satire, couched in language easily understood by the people and so illustrated as to reach the popular imagination, could do a great deal towards undermining the popularity of the Comedia. After his first theatrical success, Moratín came to realize that the writing of more didactic or satirical verse was the veriest carrying of coals to Newcastle. He saw clearly that what could be obtained from the middle class of Spanish society was already obtained and that the urgent problem before him was the more complete conversion of the pit which had already fallen away from patronizing plays of an exclusively Spanish character.*

L. F. de Moratín's La Comedia Nueva.—It was to attain this purpose that Moratín composed his "Comedia Nueva," [173] which is a sweeping condemnation of the Comedia, not of course in its best form, but conceived as it was by the weak imitators of Lope and Calderón. The author states in his preface to the Parma edition that "The Siege of Vienna," the play under fire, does not represent any one particular "comedia." It is a symbol of all bad comedies of the day containing the faults in taste and common sense that were current in the new compositions presented to the public.

D. Antonio in his conversation with Pipí tells us at the very start that the comedy to be presented that day has not any connection with the rules. Soon Don Pedro enters. His attitude of "bon bourru," his uncompromising stand on the question of telling the truth, establishes him once for all as the man of the play whose judgments are going to count and whose character is above suspicion. He is a strong contrast to the sly Don Antonio who, for the sake of amusement, is willing to be of everybody's opinion.

As a copy of the play which is to be given in a little while is at hand, Don Antonio proceeds to read snatches from the first act. The "Siege of Vienna" begins by a pageant in which appear the Emperor Leopold, the King of Poland and the Seneschal Frederic followed by a brilliant company of ladies and gentlemen whom a troop of mounted hussars escort. We soon learn that the action has been going on two years and

[173] L. F. de M., v. II, p. 183. The Comedia Nueva begins on p. 188.

a half and that, in spite of the brilliant appearance of the chiefs, the population is in a state of starvation. They are now in a condition where to sustain life, rats, toads and filthy insects have to be eaten.[174] This most indecorous horror is brought to a climax when the lady whom the Vizir, to satisfy his thirst for vengeance, has deprived of food for six days, appears on the stage. She is in a pitiful state of emaciation and she dies before the public after having exposed the cruelty of her persecutor in no measured terms. As Don Antonio is going to read her last speech, giving us a foretaste of its virulence by his ironical exclamations, Don Pedro, about to stop up his ears with his hands, begs of him to desist. Don Antonio respects his wish for the moment but soon starts again, reading this time the final verses of the first act where for six lines the Emperor, the wicked Vizir, and the Seneschal mingle their unconnected remarks. The first two recite each a line to its last word exclusively, waiting for the completion of their statement until the third one has also made a similar incomplete statement. Then, each in his turn adds his final word and the following three lines are pronounced by the three persons simultaneously, forming a kind of recited chorus.[175]

Don Pedro is of course fairly maddened by this last exhibition of stupendous nonsense and he deeply offends the author, Don Eleuterio, who defends himself by claiming that such devices are employed daily in comedies and always meet with the approval of those competent to pass judgment.

A very unequal literary struggle is about to start between the poor author and the champion of taste and good sense when a diversion is created by the entrance of D. Hermogenes. This person is also a critic, a man who knows the rules and who has read much but he is the type of critic whom Moratín had in mind when he wrote the "Derrota de los Pedantes." He is a man who, though he has a considerable fund of information, lacks judgment and good faith.

This personification of the ineffective side of neo-classic criticism is appealed to by Don Pedro and by the author to pass judgment on the merits of the comedy question.

The poor pedant is now in hard straits for he knows the weakness of the play but, as he is also the future husband of the author's daughter, his only escape out of the difficulty is to make a bewildering show of his shallow erudition. He shows himself to be one of the late eighteenth century wits whose knowledge was drawn from encyclopedias, and who,

[174] Com. N., Act I, sc. 3.

[175] L. F. de M., v. II, p. 213, Act I, sc. 3. Same in Lobo's Diálogo de Elena y Paris. B. A. E., v. LXI, pp. 21 and 30, but Lobo's dialogue was to be sung, not recited.

as a matter of fact, believed themselves to be the equals of the French "philosophes" and "encyclopédistes."

This critic "à la violeta" launches forth on an Aristotelian quotation in Latin, then turns to Greek for the sake of greater clearness. He mentions Scaliger, Vossius, Dacier and Heinsius, and an interminable list of Greek authors.[176]

When he has exhausted his stock of proper names he makes the illuminating statement that all authors agree in this; namely, that the protasis must precede the catastrophe. This argument, reminding one strongly of the reasons adduced by Sganarelle[177] to explain the dumbness of his young patient, is topped by the sudden assertion that the comedy of D. Eleuterio is an excellent one.

Don Pedro's cup is filled to overflowing; he speaks his mind with the greatest frankness to the wretched critic, he goes from the room in an outburst of temper and leaves his two victims to philosophize on the way envy thrives by the side of success.

The beginning of the second act gives us more details on the comedy entitled "The Siege of Vienna." In addition to the fascinating features mentioned above, the play has an episode where daggers are exchanged, another where the Emperor has a prophetic dream and one scene represents incantations to idols.

This second act is in the spirit of "Les Femmes Savantes." * The author's wife has literary ambitions and her heart is in her husband's work. She predicts that the comedy is going to be a great success; how could it be otherwise, are there not nine different climaxes offered to the public? Are there not represented a duel on horseback, three battles, two tempests, a funeral procession, a masked ball, the burning of a city, the destruction of a bridge together with much firing of guns? There is also the execution of a criminal. What more brilliant spectacles could be imagined and how could the people be otherwise than delighted?[178]

To all this the untutored but level-headed daughter of the author replies that, to her way of thinking, such a play ought to be presented in the bull ring.

As the author and his family realize suddenly that they have already missed the first act because of these heated discussions they hasten away. Don Pedro and Don Antonio reappear on the stage. The scene which follows, the fifth of the second act, is purely and simply a lecture on the faults of plays which do not conform to the rules. These two gentlemen

[176] Comedia Nueva, Act I, sc. 5.

[177] Le Médecin Malgré Lui, Act II, sc. 6.

[178] Act II, sc. 1.

discuss the first act.[179] They know that Don Eleuterio's comedy is doomed and the conversation in which they engage, except for the dialogue form, might just as well be a selection from the "Derrota de los Pedantes," or from some one of the many discourses and prefaces of Moratín. While Don Eleuterio and his family are at the play there may be said to be an interruption in the real comedy during which a discourse on neo-classic theories is delivered to the audience.

Don Antonio first remarks that the accumulation of stupidities which it has been their lot to hear is more amusing than annoying. Don Pedro, faithful to his truth-loving character, consistently blunt and frank, starts on a speech which is a résumé of all Moratín had to say and ever did say on the subject of the irregular drama. Let us quote him; the principles are not new but they are stated with rigor and sincerity. Even without the last sentence we should know that Don Pedro, besides being an intelligent man, is a patriotic Spaniard.

"No Señor, menos me enfada cualquiera de nuestras comedias antiguas, por malas que sean. Están desarregladas, tienen disparates; pero aquellos disparates y aquel desarreglo son hijos del genio y no de la estupidez. Tienen defectos enormes es verdad, pero entre estos defectos se hallan cosas que por vida mía, tal vez suspenden y conmueven al espectador en terminos de hacerle olvidar ó disculpar cuantos desaciertos han precedido." Don Pedro has made the usual defense of the old Spanish stage. Now he turns to the condemnation of the eighteenth century Comedia as represented by the work of Don Eleuterio. "Ahí no hay más que un hacinamiento confuso de especies, una acción informe, lances inverisímiles, episodios inconexos, caracteres mal expresados ó mal escojidos; en vez de artificio, embrollo; en vez de situaciones cómicas, mamarrachadas de linterna mágica. No hay conocimiento de historia ni de costumbres, no hay objeto moral, no hay lenguage, ni estilo, ni versificación, ni gusto, ni sentido común. En suma es tan mala y peor que las otras con que nos regalan todos los días." To these statements expressing ideas only too familiar to us, Don Antonio replies that no improvement is to be hoped for. As long as the stage continues in its present state of abasement, instead of being the mirror of virtue and the temple of good taste, it will continue to be the school of error and of extravagance.

By his next speech Don Pedro completes this "Poètica" destined for the common people. "Pero no es fatalitad que después de tanto como se ha escrito por los hombres más doctos de la nación sobre la necesi-

[179] Don Pedro has seen the performance of the first act while the others were forgetting the play in the heat of discussion.

dad de su reforma, se han de ver todavía en nuestra escena espectáculos tan infelices. ¿Qué pensarán de nuestra escuela los extranjeros que vean la comedia de esta tarde? ¿Qué dirán cuando vean las que se imprimen continuamente?" When Don Antonio suggests once more that there is no remedy and that the wise had better make light of the whole matter, Don Pedro exclaims in a fine burst of patriotic indignation, "Los progresos de la literatura, Señor Don Antonio, interesan mucho al poder, á la gloria, y á la conservación de los imperios; el teatro influye inmediatamente en la cultura nacional; el nuestro está perdido y yo soy muy español!" [180]

The didactic purpose of Moratín is now fulfilled. The rules themselves, in what they have of true value, have been declaimed from the stage and directly to those who are still making a determined stand against them. The rest of the comedy need not be any longer than is required for an effective ending. It is in these final scenes that Moratín displays great diplomatic skill.

The pit has just heard a discourse full of ideas antagonistic to its own. The author must not force the note, or the attention which he has won so far is going to be lost in a storm of whistles and jeers. Clearly it will take but little more to drive the pit to some destructive outburst. The return of Doña Agustina, the wife of the author, brings about the needed relief. The poor lady is in a state of collapse, and her condition saves the day by making a strong appeal to the sympathy of the emotional audience which, for the moment, forgets its literary prejudices.

The scene which follows is a testimony to the heretofore unsuspected excellence of judgment of the mob. This is a surprise. So far we had been led to believe that there was no such thing as common sense among the members of the pit, that their judgment was of the worst. But lo and behold! the daughter, Margarita, while her mother is being revived, tells us that the illiterate spectators, angered by the accumulation of nonsense in the comedy of Don Eleuterio, rose against it in their wrath. The good sense of the pit had been so deeply shocked by the irregularity of the play that its members had been driven to manifest their indignation with unusual intensity.

The audience in the "patio" had countenanced the tempest and the council of war. They had endured the masked ball and the funeral procession. But when the wretched mother and the still more wretched son appeared on the stage calling on Demogorgon and Cancerberus for vengeance in tones not at all weakened by their six days of starvation, the good audience in the pit had found that its patience was exhausted.

[180] Act II, sc. 5.

A riot of hi[illegible] and jeers had broken out, the curtain had to be lowered and the exi[illegible]eedily thrown open.[181]

It was [illegible]is display of purely righteous anger that poor Lady Agustina fai[illegible] t[illegible] seeing her hopes of fame and wealth thus ruthlessly swept away. [illegible] was brought back in haste to the inn by her mortified family who are now busying themselves to revive her.

Notice the consummate skill with which Moratín has escaped the fate of the author of "The Siege of Vienna." The pit was about to manifest its discontent after Don Pedro's literary sermon but, before it has had time to think up insults or lay fingers to lips, it is confronted first with a stirring rush of actors on the stage and then with a most flattering picture of itself. The astounded musketeers find that the pit agrees with Don Pedro, that it feels the necessity of the rules broken by the play in question and that the said play is altogether unbearable.

After being shown an imaginary mob possessed of such excellent literary sense, how could its counterpart of flesh and blood, which was witnessing the real play, do otherwise than agree with what was represented as its own good judgment? How could it consistently hiss, stamp and threaten violence when it had just seen its own image inflict such treatment on a play condemned at every turn by the one to which they were listening?

Moratín by this skilful fiction of the judicious mob put his own enemies in contradiction with themselves, thus disarming them. His psychological insight had been truly wonderful and had safeguarded him in such a perilous conjuncture. He had fairly hypnotized the pit into thinking itself the very opposite of what it was.

This was indeed a very great victory, but matters were not at an end. The fact remained that there were bad comedies. It was clear that the middle class was not responsible for their existence. Moratín had just proved that the generous proletariat judged such performances with very good sense. What then? Who was responsible for the inferior type of plays which was continually forced on the public? The crime must be laid at some one's door.

Moratín discharged the whole weight of the responsibility on the weak shoulders of poor Don Hermogenes, the pedant.

This representative of a class which had developed in proportion as the neo-classic school progressed and which represented its less intellectual or less sincere members reappears on the scene at the end of the play. Don Pedro immediately pounces upon him. The wretch, seeing his peril, tries to leave the room, but his enemy is upon him and will not

[181] Act II, sc. 7.

let him go. He must first own up, not only that the comedia, "The Siege of Vienna," was a detestable piece of work, but that he always considered it as such. He confesses that he had praised it only to please Don Eleuterio.

This admission is quickly interpreted in less gracious terms. The rascal tried to flatter Don Eleuterio because he had in mind the daughter's hand together with a share of the profits which would have come from the comedy had not the pit shown superior judgment.

Don Hermogenes is therefore driven away in great shame by all present. Such as he, wretched critics and pedants, are responsible for the condition of the stage in Spain. They flatter authors or else astonish the public with imbecile displays of shallow erudition, but they never teach.

We are rather surprised at seeing the poor pedant assume suddenly such proportions in wickedness. Let us not question the situation too closely, he is doing useful work in this very humble way. The pit may now say—"Indeed we have been deceived in the past by just such unscrupulous fellows"—and it was greatly to the advantage of Moratín and to that of his cause that the indignation of the illiterate public should be made to gather on the heads of anonymous pedants.

After this point had been reached there was only one thing more to be attained. The anger which was so well directed could in turn be appeased. Thus it is that the last scene of the Comedia Nueva savors strongly of the "Comédie larmoyante." Don Pedro suddenly discovers that poor Don Eleuterio has written his nonsensical comedy only as a desperate effort to supply the bare necessities of life to his family. He had no regular work. He had put his last hope in this creation of his pen and now, since that last hope had vanished, he and his family must face starvation.

Don Pedro, who until that moment had used all his energy reiterating that the comedy was the worst imaginable, and that the uneducated have no business to write, now feels moved. He too has had children; he is a blunt man but he has a kind heart. "(Aparte, con ternura.) ¡Qué lástima! . . . infeliz . . . sé lo que es el corazón de un padre. No acompaño con lágrimas estériles las desgracias de mis semejantes[182] . . . ." and in the midst of the growing emotion and subsequent disappearance of all rancor, Don Pedro offers his former enemy a remunerative position as assistant overseer of his estate. In addition he reassures Margarita, who since the flight of Don Hermogenes is obsessed with the fear of never finding a suitable husband. The play ends with dis-

[182] Act II, sc. 8.

creet tears of g[illegible]titude. The last lines are words of praise pronounced by Don Pedro [illegible]ompliment Don Eleuterio for his good fortune and his good sense wh[illegible]ave led him to become enlightened. "Vd. amigo ha vivido engañado: [illegible] amor propio, la necesidad, el ejemplo, y la falta de instrucción le ha[illegible]echo escribir disparates. El pueblo le ha dado una lección muy dura pero muy útil, puesto que por ella se conoce y se enmienda. Ojalá los que hoy tiranizan y corrompen el teatro por el maldito furor de ser autores ya que desatinan como Vd. le imitaran en desengañarse."

No play could boast of a more skilful coating of the bitter pill with the Horatian sugar. Unless they wished to claim intellectual kinship with Don Hermogenes, those who on the 7th of February, 1792, witnessed the first representation of the "Comedia Nueva" must have gone to their homes feeling convinced that plays written according to the rules were the only ones suited to the needs of an intelligent audience.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI.

P. 118. Leccion Poética. Sátira contra los vicios introducidos en la Poesía Castellana. Presented in competition for the Academy's prize in 1782. Won second prize (Forner won the first). V. IV of complete works of L. F. de Moratín published by the Academy in 1830. Exact title "Obras de Don Leandro Fernandez de Moratín dadas á la luz por la Real Academia de la Historia. 4 vols. Madrid, 1830-31.

P. 120. L. F. de M., v. III, p. 205. Introduction to Translation of Hamlet. Very severe neo-classic criticism. Evident satisfaction in proving that impossible plays are to be found outside of Spain. The play is not moral—"divide el interés y hace dudosa la existencia de una providencia justa al ver sacrificados á sus venganzas en horrenda catástrofe el amor incestuoso y el puro y filial, la amistad, la tiranía, la adulación, la perfidia y la sinceridad generosa y noble. Todo es culpa, todo se confunde en igual destrozo." (pp. 205-211.) Also many notes; ghost comes up too soon, a climax in Act I; p. 483. Stupid of him to waste his time scaring sentinels. p. 484. On—"Frailty, thy name is woman"—"¿A que fin usar de circunloquios falsos y pueriles para exprimir idea tan sencilla." p. 485 (11). Shakespeare—"ignoraba el arte y no sabía borrar." p. 486 (12). Polonius is a comedy character. p. 487 (22). Insanity of Ophelia most impressive but utterly useless to the plot. pp. 508-9 (8). On grave digger's scene, "El pueblo inglés gusta de horrores y bufonadas . . . entierros . . . brujas, etc.," p. 513 (1). "Esto agrada al vulgo y en todas las naciones le hay y quienes adulen su ignorancia y le aturdan sin enseñarle," p. 516 (6). Moratín quotes Washburton, Hammon and S. Johnson.

P. 123 Several of the neo-classic authors refer to the turbulent public who stood in the "patio." Samaniego, "Carta Sobre el Teatro," quoted by Apraiz, p. 102, speaks of "los chisperos, gente baladí, pero temible, que silban y aplauden por interés y en quienes la inclinación ó el odio, el aplauso ó el vituperio, no son un oficio de la razón sino del capricho, . . . cargue Vd. la mano contra aquellos in-

discretos que se les parecen; que gritan y se alborotan sin motivo . . . que no saben disimular los descuidos, ni celebrar los aciertos . . . bien echan de bruces, vuelven las espaldas, entran y salen, hablan, silban, tararean, etc. que ni respetan al Público ni quieren que el Público les tenga por atentos y bien criados."

P. 123. Casiano Pellicer in his "Tratado Historico sobre el origen y progresos de la Comedia y Histrionismo en España," Madrid, 1804, quotes Nicolás Antonio, Bib. real, Est. c. Cod, p. 141, folio 1786: "Este (el patio) era el sitio que ocupaba el pueblo baxo y la gente del bronco que por su bullicio y gritería fueron llamados mosqueteros con alusión al genio inquieto, desentonado y turbulento de los soldados gregarios ó rasos de aquellos tiempos llamados mosqueteros."

P. 123. Triego's play was entitled "Los Menestrales" and that of Valdés was "Las Bodas de Camacho," an adaptation of the episode in Don Quijote which bears that name.

P. 124. A complete didactic statement of neo-classic rules as understood by L. F. de Moratín forms the end (pp. 49 ff.) of the preface to v. II. This statement was partly supplied and completed for the 1830 edition from notes left by Moratín, so that this prologue is more complete than the one printed with the second edition of 1825. It has the same three aims which we met in Montiano's discourses: 1. Statement of rules, resting on the great neo-classic authorities. 2. Condemnation of Spanish irregularities in literary production. 3. A defense of the Spanish stage against foreigners who attack it from ignorance or prejudice. We should learn nothing new from a careful analysis of this lucid essay. It is a synopsis of all ideas found in the works of Moratín which we take up in this paper.

P. 126. Doña Agustina has the pretensions of Philamente, and Mariquita exhibits the type of common sense that we find in Henriette.

CHAPTER VII.

Acute Stages in the Neo-Classic Controversy at Home and Abroad.

By studying the "Comedia Nueva," we have completed the review of that series of documents which presented to each of the various classes composing Spanish society, if not the actual dogma, at least the spirit of neo-classicism.

The "Comedia Nueva" played in 1791 completed the work begun by Luzán in 1737. It was the popular form of the didactic "Arte Poética," and the logical result of its teaching.

The Influence of the Comedia Nueva.—We have just said that neo-classicism had been presented to the nation at large and we do not mean to say more than what the verb we have used strictly signifies.

To show the Spanish people systematically converted to neo-classicism,—the aristocracy by Luzán, the bourgeoisie by N. F. de Moratín's literary group and the common people by the "Comedia Nueva"—would be a most tempting "thèse." It would lend itself to fascinating developments and to stirring generalizations, but it would have the defect of being altogether inaccurate. As a matter of fact, it is the boast of Spanish students of literary history to be able to say truthfully that at no moment did the Spanish people as a whole accept the spirit of neo-classicism, to say nothing of its dogma. And we can see for ourselves how true that statement is. Luzán was not praised without reserve by those of his own party, that is, by the critics who wrote for the "Diario de los Literatos." That review itself, in spite of its initial moderation, fell under the repeated attacks of the blind devotees of the literary system which had been Spain's glory during the previous centuries. The more serious minded members of the Academy of Good Taste had had to face the open hostility of Villaroel and to overlook the temporary lapses from grace of Porcel, while Montiano, their chief, saw himself subjected to the abuse of Doms and to the no less disconcerting praise of Padre Isla.

Coming to the group centered about the Tertulia de San Sebastian, we saw that N. F. de Moratín and Cadalso, though leaders in the neo-classic movement, proved to be time and again, if not hostile, at least very ironical in their attitude towards the new literary cult, while the efforts of the government along lines of stage reform aroused the strongest popular opposition. Iriarte, the stoutest champion of neo-classicism, was

opposed by Sedano among others and he was to die brooding over the venomous shafts of Forner's libel, the "Asno Erudito."

When an opposition arose so consistently in the better educated classes against a system based on reason, it would be most futile to expect that one or any number of regular plays could have converted to neo-classicism that portion of society which of all classes loved most ardently the literature based on unbridled fancy.

The advantages gained by neo-classicism through the success scored by the "Comedia Nueva" were then extremely relative. What followed Moratín's victory was that neo-classic plays were no longer to be mobbed merely because of the principles underlying their composition; if they were not to be greeted enthusiastically by audiences freshly converted to the dogma of reason, they were to be tolerated first, and then judged on their own merits. The occupants of the "patio" still held plays at their mercy, but somehow they had lost in part the stout faith in their critical ability which had made them so powerful in the past. Plays were still hissed out of existence but such demonstrations occurred at less frequent intervals and with decreasing violence. To sum up, the right to judge had left in part the class of society in whose power it had been exclusively vested ever since the good old days of Lope and it had taken its abode among the more intellectual bourgeoisie. The reception given to the "Comedia Nueva" merely symbolized the partial yet profound change which had taken place in the literary life of Spain.*

Such writers as Cotarelo y Mori who suffer intensely at the thought that anything foreign could really have taken a firm footing in Spain, repeat, as often as they can bring about an opportunity to do so, that the "Comedia Nueva" enjoyed the merest "succès d'estime," that its pale and insipid charms were received with patience and charity but that it never scored and never could score a real triumph.*

No one will claim that little comedy to be one of the masterpieces of the world's literature. What can not be denied is that it is the only first-class production of its genre given by Spain during the whole of the eighteenth century, and that it is the direct result of those theories which had been introduced by Spaniards into their country with the hope of raising again the literature of the nation to the honorable place it had once held among European letters.

This desire to ignore facts and this consistent attempt to minimize the already modest results of the neo-classic movement are found in many Spanish writers of our own day.

This tendency to narrowness can be forgiven since, after all, it is based on a principle which is distinctly respectable, namely, patriotism.

Their spirit is that which actuated the heroes of the anti-neo-classic struggle from Villaroel to Forner. It represents the blind patriotism which feels that admission of a national weakness is akin to high treason and it is the counterpart of the attitude of the members of the neo-classic movement who grieved at being compelled to admit any national weakness but who were filled with the hope that time and well directed energy could bring about the necessary remedy.

The Attitude of Foreigners Towards Spain During the Neo-Classic Controversy.—It is only fair to admit that the attitude of foreigners in the majority of cases was not one calculated to draw from patriotic Spaniards any candid confession of literary inferiority. The lines of Boileau condemning the Spanish drama were fairly typical of the attitude of arrogance of the neo-classicists of Europe towards the nation which was still outside the rational fold. Montiano had good grounds for attacking, if not the very words, at least the supercilious attitude of Du Perron.

As the century wore on, the interest of foreigners in Spanish matters kept increasing and the judgment emitted contained, quite consistently, pity for Spain's literary folly in the past and, in a protecting tone, hopes for a prompt regeneration.

We recall that after Du Perron, Hermilly had shown his zeal for Spanish literature by translating the prologues and the tragedies of Montiano, making possible the premature enthusiasm of Lessing and helping Dieze of Göttingen in his painstaking research on Spanish subjects. Above all, the Jesuits by means of the Journal de Trévoux kept informing their readers of the progress of literature in Spain. Finally the din arising from the neo-classic controversy waxed so in volume as to become perceptible to foreign ears across the Pyrenees and to awake an echo over the sea among Italian "littérateurs."

J. F. de Bourgoing.—The most intelligent and the fairest account of conditions in Spain written by a Frenchman is to be found in the "Nouveau voyage en Espagne" published in 1789 by Baron Jean François de Bourgoing. This gentleman has left us an impartial judgment of the condition of the drama at the Spanish capital towards the end of the century.[183] It is clear from his account that he possessed an unusually broad judgment for, as we shall be able to see presently, his criticisms are based not on narrow considerations of adherence or non-adherence to a few Aristotelian rules, but they derive altogether from the much deeper standards arising from good taste and sound common sense.

What keen power of observation and analysis the French traveler

[183] Nouveau voyage en Espagne ou Tableau de l'Etat Actuel de cette Monarchie, 1789, by Jean François, baron de Bourgoing. 3 vols.

possessed may be deduced from the following lines in which he explains to his countrymen the reasons why the literature in favor in France can never become popular in Spain: "Leur imagination hardie jusqu'á l'extravagance, pour laquelle la boursoufflure n'est que de l'enthousiasme, trouve nos conceptions froides et timides. Accoutumés à l'exagération et à la redondance, ils ne peuvent apprécier le mérite de la justesse et de la précision de nos expressions. Les fines nuances du tableau de nos ridicules et de nos moeurs échappent à leurs yeux trop exercés sur des caricatures, et quant aux formes de notre style, leur oreille gâtée par la brillante prosodie de leurs phrases cadencées, par le retour fréquent et affecté de leurs mots sonores, ne peut trouver de grâce à des mots souvent sourds, qui parlent plus à l'âme qu'aux sens, et la rondeur de leurs élégantes périodes est perdue pour elle."[184] A little farther, Bourgoing passes adverse criticism on the too great complexity of plot in the Comedia, but he remarks with admiration on the wide-awake audiences who manage never to lose the thread of an action no matter how complex it may be. He condemns the "Gracioso," "un insipide bouffon," but he adds that "le théâtre espagnol pourrait encore être pour nous une source abondante de richesse, à present sur tout que notre imagination, beaucoup moins féconde que celle de nos alliés paraît s'être épuisée et que notre gôut plus épuré, plus sûr qu'il n'était du temps de Corneille, saurait mieux extraire de cette mine les trésors qu'elle recèle." [185]

What Bourgoing can not comprehend is the admiration of intelligent Spaniards for the punning and quibbling propensities of their authors: "J'ai souvent remarqué avec étonnement qu'ils honoraient du nom de traits ingénieux, qu'ils applaudissaient avec une sorte de ravissement des plaisanteries que nous reléguerions au rang de pitoyables calembours." [186] Furthermore Bourgoing was rather disgusted with the supremacy of the "patio" which is as noisy and hard to suit as if it had the right to have a voice in the matter. The cautiousness with which players and playwrights cater to its least whims reminds him of the worship paid by Indians to the Devil or of the cake thrown by the Sybil into the jaws of Cerberus. Equally repulsive to Bourgoing was the deliberate choice of an inferior ideal by the better classes of society. He was shocked to see people of quality seeking eagerly to have it said of them "Il a bien l'air d'un Majo," or "On la prendrait pour une Maja."*

Yet in spite of all these reservations and this undisguised scorn for a turn of mind which had hitched its wagon to the low-lying star of the

[184] Bourgoing, v. I, p. 321.
[185] Bourgoing, v. I, p. 331.
[186] Bourgoing, v. I, p. 333.

"rude populaire," we can find nowhere a more noble tribute to the excellent qualities of the better representatives of the Spanish dramatic genres.

On certain "saynetes" he exclaims "Ce n'est pas une imitation, c'est la chose même!" and in at least one instance he is not afraid to compare favorably the Spanish drama with that of his own country. These are his words:

"Les Espagnols, nos prédécesseurs sinon nos maîtres, nos guides sinon nos modèles dans la carrière dramatique ont été moins timides, moins exclusifs que nous en la parcourant. Ils ont dans leurs anciennes comédies des exemples attachants de toutes les vertus qu'on peut prêcher à un peuple, de loyauté, de fermeté, de justice, de bienfaisance surtout. On a beau dire, malgré les extravagances qui servent de canevas au Poète, malgré l'exagération des traits de son tableau, on sort de pareilles représentations plus disposé à l'exercice de ces vertus, qu'on ne le serait au sortir des meilleures pièces tout à fait comiques où l'on se borne à tirer une suite de situations plaisantes du fond d'un caractère bien tracé ou l'on prend des leçons de malignité plutôt que des leçons de bonté." [187]

Had all foreign critics been as impartial and as well informed as Bourgoing, only the most extreme Gallophobes could have taken exception to their statements. He condemned in the Spanish drama only those points which, near the end of the neo-classic controversy, had been abandoned by so many good Spaniards of the better or more educated classes. Unfortunately Bourgoing is a rather isolated representative of justice and good sense among the foreign writers who interested themselves in the literature of Spain and it is no wonder that the champions of the anti-neo-classic movement were soon obliged to turn such weapons as they had against the cocksure and snobbish foreigners who, with little learning and no greater amount of good sense, undertook to judge Spanish literature and Spanish civilization. The most shocking instance of this combination of ignorance and prejudice was the article prepared for the "Nouvelle Encyclopédie" by an author now altogether forgotten, who exclaimed arrogantly in the essay on Spain: "Que doit-on à l'Espagne?" concluding that no one had ever owed anything to Spain, a country whose contribution to civilization was, to all intents and purposes, nihil.

What with the natural sensitiveness of Castilian pride exasperated by the brutality of such a statement and what with the pin pricks caused by reservations made by fairer and more intelligent critics, Spanish writers, for a time, found themselves involved in a hot literary controversy with foreigners. As it often happens in such cases, those who

[187] Bourgoing, v. I, p. 351.

after all were the least guilty received the heaviest blame. The Italians, one of whom, Signorelli, we have already mentioned, and two others, Bettinelli and Tiraboschi, had each written a treatise on the history of Spanish literature. Each had been guilty of heaping at least a minimum of neo-classic maledictions on the Spanish stage.

The book of Signorelli is still a highly respectable piece of work and, at the time of its publication, it stood head and shoulders above any other compilation of its kind published in Spain. Ticknor mentions it as being still able to yield valuable information on the field it aimed to cover. But, as we have already hinted, it viewed the subject of the drama from the standpoint of the reforming party. Its publication was followed by renewed indignation on the part of the antagonists of the reform movement who saw just one thing; namely, that whereas, up to that date, the dispute over neo-classicism had been "en famille," so to speak, now the shame of Spain had become the public property of all the enemies of the nation.

If the true patriots found Signorelli's work objectionable they had a still better cause for indignation in the books of Tiraboschi and of Bettinelli who, by the hackneyed dogmatic condemnation of free fancy sought to avenge their own country from the slurs cast on it by Valázquez some forty years before. They felt that it was time to show the world that Italy was not responsible for Spain's deplorable literary taste. To make sure of their point, they went farther than to deny Italy's guilt and laid the responsibility for such errors as might be picked in Italian literature at the door of Spain, quite turning the tables on their long-deceased opponent. With great solemnity these two worthies enlarged on the baneful influence of Spain, a country much given to bombast and incapable, because of the very nature of its climate, of producing great orators and great poets!

This misdirected and not altogether well-meaning interest displayed by Italians called forth a seven-volume rejoinder from one of the Jesuit Fathers who after the expulsion of their order from Spain in 1776 had taken up their abode in Italy.*

Father Lampillas.—Father Lampillas,[188] in spite of his exile and the cruel treatment which he had shared with the other members of his order at the hands of the government of Charles III, had lost none of his love for the fatherland.

He gave a powerful proof of his love of country when he undertook to refute, in seven volumes, as we have just said, the combined attacks of Bettinelli and Tiraboschi, making in addition such slight incur-

[188] The more correct and less popular spelling of this name is Llampillas.

sions against the book of Signorelli as seemed to him advisable. In 1789 the whole of Lampillas' work was translated by Doña Josepha Amor y Borbón who undertook this heavy task, as she tells us, in the foreword, to facilitate the defense of the good name of Spain.

The work of Lampillas, although it is at once an apology and a refutation, is not at all indignant in its tone. Its author knew that the attack of the Italian writers was justified to some extent and that whatever was unfair in it rested on arguments so flimsy that only the strongest prejudice or bad faith could find in them anything conclusive.* Lampillas admitted that Tiraboschi and Bettinelli had praised Spanish Literature as often as they had been able to base their approval on what seemed to them solid reasons. What he objected to was the small number of times that the two Italians had felt justified in dispensing praise. According to them, the history of Spanish literature was comparable to a long night of bad taste broken into only at rare intervals by faint glimmers of common sense. Furthermore, twice in the history of Italian letters had Spanish influence proved deleterious. It had brought about the decadence of letters which followed the Augustan age and it had introduced its Gongorism into Italy at the end of the sixteenth century.

It may very well be that this heavy responsibility laid on Spanish literature was only a way on the part of the Italian writers in question to strike back at Velázquez who, as we have seen, had claimed that Góngorism was of Italian origin.

This did not occur to Lampillas, for he reproaches Bettinelli and Tiraboschi for having made use neither of Antonio's monumental work on Spanish literature nor of the little treatise of Velázquez.[189]

Whether or not the works of the two Italian writers contained a refutation of the theories of Velázquez, their main attacks on Spanish literature were based on the commonplaces of neo-classic criticism which we have enumerated so often in the course of this study that we may well be spared the task of restating them at this point.

In just one instance did the Italian critics introduce a new element into their discussion, and that element was of such a nature as to amuse the reader rather than to convince him. Both these writers had become imbued with the theories of Father Du Bos concerning the influence of climate on national character. This had caused them to make, perhaps quite independently, the same remark on the real cause for the presence of elements of extravagance in Spanish letters. Spaniards, said Tiraboschi, have a natural tendency to over-subtlety and this arises directly from the nature of their country's climate. In the quality of

[189] Lampillas, v. I, p. 27.

Spain's climate lies the cause which has brought it about that the peninsula, while rich in scholastic philosophers, has produced so few great poets or great orators. Bettinelli made a statement bearing a similar meaning, but neither writer attempted to trace the mysterious relationship which they felt existed between Castilian climate and Castilian love for brilliancy and exaggeration in art.*

As climate is after all a pretty consistent factor in any formula, these statements amounted to saying that Spain had never been free from the Gongoristic blight in the past and that, short of some great natural cataclysm, the future would bring no marked improvement.

Lampillas took the matter quite seriously, combated it by minimizing as well as he could the harm done by the excessive ingenuity of Spanish authors, and then proceeded to carry war into the enemy's camp by discussing the weak points of Italian literature.

Italians, said Lampillas, are willing to admit that the founders and the models of their literature are Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio; this is as much as confessing that poetry is the only genre of importance in Italian literature and that solidarity of thought is consistently sacrificed to harmony, grace and polish.[190]

This judgment is natural enough in an ecclesiastic who would consider a literature as good only in so far as it gave evidence of an avowed moral purpose. The neo-classic movement advocating a simple and direct style and preferring to deal with rationalistic ideas seemed to Lampillas to deserve the same treatment as poetry. Like the other forms of polite letters, it dealt with puny subjects and Spain might well be said to be decadent since it had abandoned the leadership of its great mystic writers to follow the footsteps of shallow philosophers and scientists. What are the modern investigators compared to the great Church Fathers? "¿ Porqué ha de ser una empresa tan grande indagar el movimento de los cuerpos por las leyes de la atracción y no ha de ser igual—reflexionar con San Augustín y otros Padres como atrae la gracia nuestro corazón? Mas este es el modo de pensar del siglo presente." [191]

If we were to add to these remarks specific judgments passed by Lampillas on Italian literature we should see that he had no very clear idea of the nature and function of polite letters since he confuses their purpose with that of theology or at least would limit their usefulness to the expression of religious faith.

The one instance in which Lampillas breaks away from the customary judgments of his party or of his profession is in dealing with the Comedia. He does not limit himself, like the majority of the apolo-

[190] V. III, pp. 1 ff.
[191] V. III, p. 35.

gists of the genre, to singing the praises of the style and dramatic ingenuity of the authors of the old school. Lampillas, while recognizing these qualities, went deeper into the matter and founded his favorable judgment of the Comedia on the fact that it described with admirable fidelity a certain phase in the development of Spanish society. What Lampillas found to admire in the Comedia was not so much its intricacies and its lyricism but its realism.

Just how original this way of judging the Comedia was with him is difficult to say. He expounds it with clearness but, in so doing, he makes use mainly of quotations drawn from authors who had expressed a similar idea in connection with some other form of literature. Whether his opinion happened to coincide with those of other critics or whether he merely derived his from theirs we can not say. Even in the latter case he would have shown some originality in applying to a Spanish genre the kind of thought which was obtaining more and more partisans in the rest of Europe.

From Fontenelle's "Life of Corneille" Lampillas quoted the following lines: "Para hacer recto juicio de una obra, basta considerarla en sí misma, mas por juzgar bien del mérito de un autor, es preciso atender al siglo en que escribió." [192] Then taking the second half of the statement as being true, not only in the case of the author of a "comedia" but also in that of his work, he aims to show that it is unreasonable to judge such a play without a knowledge of the ideals of the society for which it was composed.[193]

This plea for the admission, in criticism, of the element of relativity is followed by an attack on the French drama which quite anticipates the criticisms of Schlegel and of his disciples, the critics of the Romantic school: "Peor que hacer Rodomonte y Penthesileas á los Caballeros y Damas Españolas, es presentarnos al inflexible Régulo cortejando y teniendo siempre á su lado á su querida como dice Dorat del Régulo de Pradón y el representar á Achiles suspirando de su Dama; aquel Achiles que segun Horacio debería pintarse;

> Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer [194]
> Jura neget sibi nata, nihil non arroget armis."

Those who write plays so far removed from reality are the ones who yield to unworthy ideals. Of these are the French authors who have weakly bowed before "el imperio popular y mugeril." [195]

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[192] V. VI, p. 239.
[193] V. VII, p. 239.
[194] V. VII, p. 242.
[195] V. VII, p. 269.

To complete his argument he quotes again, this time from Goldoni: "No obstante yo creo que más escrupulosamente que algunos preceptos de Aristoteles ó de Horacio se deben guardar las leyes del pueblo en su espetáculo destinado á su instrucción por medio de su entretenimiento y deleite." [196]

While Lampillas was adopting this new and efficient argument to defend his country among foreigners, García de la Huerta was giving utterance, at home, to the pent-up indignation of that class of Spanish society which had not become reconciled with the theories of the neo-classic school or with the efforts at applying these theories.

García de la Huerta.—With the usual desire of vindicating the Spanish drama, García de la Huerta had published a collection of Spanish "comedias" under the title of "Teatro Hespañol." [197] The bad selection of the plays and the strange spelling of the title were to bring upon the compiler a flood of ridicule while the introduction, by its virulence, was to make him many bitter enemies in and out of Spain.

It is this introduction which interests us now. It contains an expression of all the exasperation which had been fermenting in certain uncompromising Castilian hearts ever since the neo-classic movement had begun and more so than ever since Spain's literary civil war had come to the notice of unsympathetic foreigners.

In his prologue, then, we find that Huerta not only defended the Spanish drama and attacked the neo-classic school generally but we see him making efforts to convict Signorelli of ignorance, Voltaire of bad faith, Du Perron of impertinence and Linguet * of stupidity. Not satisfied with having humiliated to his own satisfaction those foreigners who had dared meddle with Spanish literature, he made a sweeping condemnation of the French drama, then turned on those Spanish authors who had had the misfortune of being praised by foreigners. Cervantes, for instance, is dealt with mercilessly in this attempt to lay low everything neo-classic in and out of Spain. This severity was due to the theory expounded by Nasarre concerning the hidden meaning of the great Spaniard's "comedias" and also to the neo-classic turn of the forty-eighth chapter of the Quijote.*

As a whole, this essay of Huerta is a chaotic piece of writing abounding in contradictions and paradoxes expressed in a style which has the merit of keeping the reader either stirred or amused.

Signorelli is the first individual executed by Huerta who has found colossal blunders in his work on Spanish literature. Signorelli, it would

[196] V. VII, p. 273.

[197] La escena Hespañola Defendida en el Prólogo del Theatro Hespañol de D. Vicente García de la Huerta. Madrid, 1786.

seem, had stated that no autos had been written before Lope and he had made the amazing announcement that the great dramatist had written his "Arte Nuevo" to placate the Spanish Academy. What Spanish Academy? exclaims Huerta. There was no society known by that name in the days of Lope. The Italian author must have meant to refer to the unofficial "Academia de Madrid." If only he would try to state facts correctly instead of digressing at every moment into criticisms of his own making, his work might hope to have some value. As a matter of fact he is so poorly informed that he does not know the origin of the terms "Polacos" and "Chorizos." Instead of trying to investigate the matter, he prefers to cry out against the actions of these worthy representatives of popular taste who, as a matter of fact, behave neither better nor worse than the theatre-loving mob of any other country. Barring a few fist cuffs now and then they form an eminently respectable part in a theatrical audience.[200]

Passing brusquely from Signorelli's work to some French translations of Spanish "comedias" published in 1780 by an anonymous author, he reviles the latter for having compared the auto to the French "mystères" and then eagerly grasps this opportunity to denounce in neo-classic style, the absurdity of the French medieval genre. "Comedias" at their worst never exhibited such extravagant and absurd plots as were found currently in the early dramatic productions of France. Furthermore the unknown author was not up-to-date when he wrote the introduction to his translations. He simply followed Voltaire and for that reason committed the blunder of speaking of the autos as if they were still to be seen on the Spanish stage. Huerta did not let such a mistake pass by unchallenged and, as the poor ignoramus was unwise enough to add insult to injury by making ironical remarks on the great productivity of certain Spanish authors, he drew on his own nation a raging harangue the purpose of which was to leave it stripped of every shred of honor or glory. In one paragraph, Huerta tried to take revenge on France for all the slights lavished on Spain by her since the insulting attitude of the Jesuits before the foundation of the "Diario" to the infamous interpretation of Du Bos' theory by Bettinelli and Tiraboschi at the other end of the century.

It is no wonder, exclaims Huerta, that our dramatic field seems too rich and too rugged to the flabby intellects of men living in a country of swampy lands, lacking totally "in sulphur and substances" and so inadequately visited by the sun's rays that plants never can thrive unless supported and trained in all kinds of artificial ways. To this gloomy, damp,

[200] First twenty pages of Huerta's *Prólogo*.

and spiritless land, the mentality of the nation corresponds well enough. The flaccid intellects of a people living in this country of the midnight sun can never hope to produce anything except works of the most mediocre type.*

No wonder that the splendid genius of Spanish literature should dazzle those who are accustomed to see in the ignorant plagiarizer, Corneille, and in the weakling, Racine, the highest conceivable form of art; Racine who tried to hide his absence of inspiration under an insipid Hellenism, and Corneille who became great only after he had written a poor imitation of a poor play by one of Spain's most insignificant authors.

This rather amusing tirade shows Huerta in his bitterest mood, when, with the hope of humiliating foreign authors, he is willing to undermine the claims to glory of even the best writers of his country.

Voltaire who had translated "En esta vida todo es verdad, todo mentira" offered to Huerta more legitimate opportunities for criticism. His knowledge of Castilian was not very thorough and, besides, it probably did not lie within the power of any human being to express adequately the generous bombast and vivacity of a Spanish "comedia" in terms of neo-classic diction. Voltaire did his best to give formal and elegant paraphrases of those "agudezas" which he understood. As for the others, which were many, he was compelled to confess his inability to make them yield any sense, saying in all such cases "On ne conçoit rien à ce discours."

Paraphrases and admissions of ignorance were commented on by Huerta in no measured terms. The latter gave him a particularly fine chance to brand his victim with epithets denoting ignorance and to exclaim "Debió aver puesto la misma nota al principio de ella diciendo 'Yo no intiendo nada de esta Comedia.' Asi se hubiese escusado los vergonzosos y repetidos errores que incurre en su 'Famosa Comedia.' " *

The use of this adjective "Famosa" had given Huerta a fine opportunity to attack Voltaire at the very start. Our translator did not know that the "Famosa" prefixed to a title was merely a convention and did not represent an estimate of the play. In his misapprehension, he had the adjective printed with the title as if to single out ironically that particular play from less glorious ones, and Huerta lost no time in turning the joke on the joker.

As Huerta's criticism spared the humble no more than the great, we find in this same essay, pretty severe judgments passed on Linguet who had published, in 1770, a collection of fifteen comedies and five "entremeses" translated into French. Though "El Alcalde de Zalamea" figured in these French translations, Huerta exclaims at length on the bad taste of Linguet and then proceeds to pick to pieces the fine metaphors by means of

which Linguet, after heroic efforts, had managed as Voltaire before him to render Castilian puns and quibbles. These had proved as much of a stumbling block to him as to the agile wit of Voltaire. Huerta concludes disdainfully by saying that Linguet was well meaning but quite stupid and quite ignorant of the language which he was trying to turn to French.[201]

This criticism of Voltaire and Linguet was surely better founded than the wholesale reviling of French literature based on climatological reasons and the lack of sulphur in French loam, but we must admit that this essay as a whole is the creation of a most undisciplined imagination. The majority of the judgments it contains are in no way critical but arise directly from an unbridled hatred of foreigners. Yet here and there, in this paper and perhaps more frequently in another directed against Samaniego, Huerta seems to have had lucid intervals during which he saw clearly the real points at issue. In such cases he was able to say tersely and adequately the few things which it was eminently the right of those of his party to say. For instance, after mentioning the optimistic attitude of Nasarre who still hoped to discover regular plays in Spanish literature, he remarked with evident good sense: "No quedaría su proposición tan sujeta á la nota de jactancia si se redujese á afirmar que se puede presentar á los Estranjeros un extraordinario número de Piezas Hespañolas que, sin embargo de algunas irregularidades, envuelven más ingenio, más invencion, más gracia y generalmente mejor poesía que todos sus Theatros correctos y arreglados." [202]

Again in the answer to "Cosme Damián," where his line of argument has compelled Huerta to class the plays of Cervantes among the worst ever written in the Spanish tongue and to accuse their author of having taken up neo-classic theorizing only out of spite against Lope, he exclaims: "Véase quán abstrusas deben ser unas reglas que á los diez años sabía ya Lope y en qualquiera estudio de Gramática Latina se dan como las de la Retórica por apéndice de ella." [203] In this one phrase he lays bare the whole of the pedantic side of neo-classicism, the principles of which appeared mysterious only when certain of their supporters expressed them by means of a barbaric vocabulary and with involved diction.

In spite of the statement quoted above to the effect that the thing for Spaniards to do is to show the good qualities of the Comedia and not to search for problematical tragedies of the regular school, Huerta in his attack on Samaniego takes up the well-worn arguments to prove the antiquity of regular plays in Spain. The cause for such contradictions as

[201] V. IV, p. 124.

[202] Prólogo, p. 148.

[203] Answer to Cosme Damián, p. xxxii.

this, is, as we have said, that Huerta has only one principle in mind—to hit back at impertinent foreigners who have misjudged or insulted his country. Criticism has nothing to do with his arguments. As a matter of fact he is so free from dogmatic prejudice that there are times when he does not hesitate to adopt all the tenets of neo-classicism if through them he can harass his opponents. Thus he gives us quite solemnly and with a sententiousness worthy of a member of an Aristotelian Academy, an analysis of the "Numancia Destruida" of Cervantes, condemning it because of its infraction of the rules of good taste. The reading of such a passage, if taken out of its true relation to the rest of the essay, might cause an unwary reader to classify Huerta with Luzán.*

One might think that this attitude of respect towards the rules so unexpectedly exhibited by Huerta was merely ironical. But such is not the case. Huerta seems to be able to argue sincerely on both sides of the question. He believes that the arguments which he brings against Cervantes are unanswerable, being founded on logic, and yet he refuses absolutely to detect any irregularity in the "comedias" of Lope. To ruin the reputation of Cervantes, whom he hates as a "preceptista," he admits the wisdom of the rules and in the next paragraph, with perfect composure he assures his reader that there is nothing unreasonable in Lope. Moreover he gives as specimens of rational literature the erratic compositions found in his "Theatro Hespañol." *

Assertions without proofs, paradoxes and contradictions of all kinds, all made to fit into arguments intended to prop up Spain's dramatic glory, give but a poor opinion of Huerta's intellectual powers. If it were not for the flashes of understanding shown here and there, these essays would not be worth reading except as curiosities. Of this redeeming type is the last paragraph in the attack on Samaniego where again Huerta summarizes the whole situation by saying that what is now expected from neo-classicists is not endless theorizing but good dramatic composition "Siendo la verdadera impugnacíon en estos casos y la menos sospechosa el presentar modelos perfectos: porque ladrar trivialidades que nadie ignora arguye más espíritu de venganza y malignidad que suficiencia.[204]

Signorelli.—Signorelli who had spent eighteen years of his life in Spain [205] in the most friendly intercourse with the leaders of the "Tertulia de San Sebastián" was very much disturbed by the attacks directed against him by Lampillas and by Huerta.*

[204] Cosme, D., p. xxxii.

[205] Signorelli, v. IV, p. 81, tells us that he left Spain in 1783, one year before the appearance of Huerta's "Gran Prólogo," and that his total residence in Spain had lasted eighteen years.

The prologue to the "Theatro Hespañol" was written a year after Signorelli had returned to Italy and that author in self-defense published, in Italian, a second edition of his history of the drama in Spain in which he strove to combat, by foot-notes and by paragraphs inserted in the body of the work, the accusation of ignorance and bad faith made against him by his Spanish opponents. To make his victory more certain, Signorelli proceeded to review the blunders of the main Spanish critics who had dealt with the drama since the beginning of the century. He took a cruel pleasure in showing where Montiano's knowledge of literary history was inadequate, wherein Nasarre made himself ridiculous* and where Velázquez failed to convince his reader. Of course he passed from irony to anger when coming to the writings of Huerta and proved rather harsh against Lampillas whose quarrel after all had been mainly with Bettinelli and with Tiraboschi, and not with Signorelli.

There is no doubt that Signorelli was better informed and more capable as a literary historian than any of his competitors and detractors. The confidence which he felt in his superiority is shown in the assured and calm way with which he states his arguments particularly in the case of the old, old question concerning the existence of regular plays in the peninsula. They could have been found in Sa de Miranda but attempts to make the foundation of the Spanish stage antedate that of any other in Europe are frivolous. Referring to the argument generally brought forward to this effect, Signorelli says "Non si avvidero questi eruditi che un 'puó essere' in buona logica non mai produce per conseguenza un é." [206]

In spite of the controversial elements it contained, this new edition of Signorelli's work retained in the main its original tone and the criticisms of Spanish plays, while following the rules of good taste, give evidence of a friendly spirit. His indignation against the treatment he had received from Huerta did not blind him to the extent of making him reverse his opinions. The closing lines of the work, coming after Signorelli has spent his thunder against his opponents, form a sane and sympathetic statement of the good qualities of Spanish "comedias": "Ma non lasciamo di dire che se essi al loro sale nativo, alla vivacitá e feconditá dell' immaginazione, alla predilezione che hanno pel teatro accopiato avessero un prudente timore di offendere la verisimiglianza e si fossero appigliati ad uno stile più conveniente al genere, avrebbero forse in tal carriera superati i loro vicini e i lontani." [207]

By this we see that Signorelli and Bourgoing, who represent the

[206] Storia Critica De' Teatri Antichi e Moderni di Pietro Signorelli. In Napoli, 1789, v. IV, p. 83.

[207] Signorelli, v. IV, p. 281.

higher class of foreign critics interested in the neo-classic controversy, had just about the same opinions, consisting in a liberal part of admiration for Spanish genius to which they added the expression of their disappointment at the thought that no adequate discipline ever guided such brilliant qualities.

Since we have undertaken to review, in this section of our study, the main facts of the international aspect of the neo-classic struggle in Spain, we may well, for the sake of completeness, mention two or three more authors who undertook the defense of their country against the attack directed against it by badly informed foreigners.

We have already alluded to the gratuitous insult flung at Spain by a Frenchman bearing the name of Masson who contributed to the "Nouvelle Encyclopédie" an article on the land of Lope and Cervantes. "Que doit-on à l'Espagne?" exclaimed that gentleman in his essay, "et depuis deux siècles, depuis quatre, depuis dix qu'a-t-elle fait pour l'Europe?" This absurd prologue was enough to exasperate all true Spaniards who felt, and rightly enough, that their country had been insulted in the face of all Europe.

The scandal caused by the article of the tactless Frenchman had its echo even in Germany where an Italian priest residing at the court of Frederic the Great read in 1786, on the King's birthday, a discourse intended to rehabilitate Spain in the eyes of Europe.

Father Denina.—In his address Father Denina did not hesitate to admit the relative inferiority of contemporary Spain when compared to her neighbors but he grew indignant at the thought that the glorious past of that country should have been ignored by a citizen of the one nation who owed most to that past.* Denina set out to make a rapid review of Spanish civilization mentioning first that nation's unquestioned leadership in religious matters and then opposing to the names of the most important scholars and authors of Europe Spanish thinkers equally prominent in the same branches. Convarrucio preceded Cujas, medicine flourished in Spain (through the Arabs) when the rest of Europe knew none of its principles, and it was under the Spanish rule that anatomical studies were most flourishing in the Low Countries. Descartes was a great genius but he owed much to Pereira Gomez. When France boasted of Budé, and Flanders of Erasmus, Spain had the philosopher Luis Vivés.*

In purely literary matters, Spain held her rank even more easily than in other forms of intellectual activity.

Who could deny the superiority of either Villena or Santillana over Charles d'Orléans, or that of Boscán and Garcilaso over the poets of the

Pléiade? Besides, according to Denina, France had never possessed any epic poems, whereas the genre had flourished in Spain.

At least as strange as the remark just reported was the way Denina accounted for the interest shown by Francis I in intellectual and artistic matters. That monarch, he claims, harbored his new ideals during his enforced stay in Madrid and thus the French Renaissance would have been in part of Spanish origin!*

On the matter of the Spanish drama, Denina gave nearly the arguments already expounded by Lampillas and which seem to have found frequent utterance towards the end of the century: "Quand on reproche aux Espagnols l'irrégularité de leurs pièces de Théâtre" said Denina "on devrait faire une réflexion qui les excuse. Les moeurs ont prodigieusement changé . . . ces unités tant inculquées ne sont plus soutenables et les Espagnols ont cru que l'on pourrait plaire et instruire sans se gêner à ce point." [208]

The fame of this discourse traveled from Germany to Spain and Pablo Forner saw one more opportunity to cry out against science and the rest of Europe by composing an apology of Denina's discourse.

This work of Forner is not literary but religious and moral. As must have become evident to the reader of this study, the time had come when the neo-classic movement in the course of its evolution had passed out of the literary field, in which it had started, to extend to nearly all the other fields of intellectual activity as well as to matters of religion. By gradually leaving the discussion of the good and bad points of the three unities it had taken the road followed by the French "philosophes." By slow degrees it had become the weapon of those who wished to reform the state and the church. If we quote from Forner's apology it is only because we are thus enabled to illustrate the last stages in the evolution which we have just mentioned.*

Voltaire had said somewhere that in Spain "no one thought" and Forner, taking that "boutade" as a fair equivalent of the spirit of Masson's article, had indignantly developed it as follows: "No se piensa en España, así es; no se piensa en derribar las aras que la humana necesidad, guiada por una infalible revelación, ha levantado al Arbitro del universo." [209] He warns Spaniards against the imposture of science, the fraud underlying the apparent truths taught by mathematics; and feeling that his argument contains too many negatives, he concludes with these words de-

[208] Denina, p. 35.

[209] Oración Apologética Por la España y su Mérito Literario. Para que sirva de exornación al Discurso leído por el Abate Denina, etc. Por Don Juan Pablo Forner, 1786, p. 19.

scribing Spain as "Una nación, cuya náutica y arte militar ha dado á Europa, en vez de un soñado y árido mundo Cartesiano, un mundo real y efectivo, manantial perenne de riquezas." [210]

Denina's essay was not received with praise by all Spaniards. It was reviewed by the "Censor" in its CXIIIth article and treated very severely by the representatives of those Spaniards who felt that the only way to prepare for the regeneration of Spain was first to let all the truth be known no matter how dark a picture was to be the result. Arguments like those offered by Denina, though they showed the good intention of that author, were untimely and dangerous. Spaniards must know and admit the worst. Only a complete realization of their extreme weakness will drive them to making efforts necessary to regain the glory which they lost through vanity and sloth. The editors of the "Censor" spoke bitterly of "una cierta teología, una cierta moral, una cierta jurisprudencia, y una cierta política que nos han hecho ignorantes y nos tienen pobres."*

To all this, Forner retorted with the argument that Spain was none the less the most faithful daughter of Rome. When the "Censor" mentioned the poverty of Spain, Forner exclaimed: "Look on our spiritual leadership, Spain is still the land of St. Augustine."

Truly these matters have taken us far afield. We are a long way from literary criticism. In part to return to our field of study, in part to conclude our review of those foreigners who expressed opinions on the literary struggle which was going on among their Spanish neighbors, we may well conclude with a quotation from the one Frenchman who seems to have always looked on Spain with an eye of love. We refer to the fabulist Florian, the imitator of Iriarte. The following lines in praise of the ill-fated play "Los Menestrales" composed by the poet Trigueros show that Florian did not realize the importance of the resistance offered to the neo-classic movement by the popular party in Spain.

The fact that we know how relative and precarious was the progress of the disciples of Luzán will make the quotation only the more interesting to us. In addition it is pleasant to be able to finish this review of works which contained so much bitterness and irony with words breathing good will and optimism. These were the lines in which Florian expressed his naïve faith in Spain's classicism:

Entrez dans ces Académies
Dont les lumières réunies
Dirigent les naissants auteurs.
Feuilletez leurs littérateurs.
Deja l'art dramatique a franchi son aurore:

[210] Ibid., p. 74.

Un plat bouffon n'est plus au nombre des acteurs.
Leur langue grave, énergique, sonore
N'admet plus dans les vers l'obscure métaphore
L'enflure gigantesque et le faux coloris.
L'invention a prêté à chaque personnage
Des traits divers, mais propres et précis;
L'intérêt n'est plus l'assemblage
Du concours prodigué d'incidents inouïs.
Et des trois unités le précepte si sage
Méprisé trop longtemps a gagné le suffrage
Des gens de goût, des beaux esprits.
Oeuvres de Trigueros, vous m'en êtes un gage.
Vous honneur du Toscan rivage,
A nos récents auteurs qui ravissez le prix,
Goldoni, Zeno, Métastase,
Un rival vous est né sur les bords du Bétis.
C'est dans ce cristal pur que s'abreuve Pégase:
Et par delà ces monts, émules du Caucase,
Va succéder au siècle de Louis
Le siècle de son Petit Fils.[211]

Even though expressed in pretty wretched verse so much enthusiasm for the supposed greatness of Spain and such a naïve faith in her future ought to atone at least in part for the insulting tone of Masson's article in "La Nouvelle Encyclopédie."

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII.

P. 134. L. F. de Moratín's play, "El Barón," played in 1803, was nearly run off the stage by the mob at first, the rest of the audience regaining control after a time. "La Mogigata" was rather well received in 1804, while "El Sí de las Niñas" in 1806 thoroughly pleased the people. (These details can be found in the prefaces of the plays in the edition of 1830.)

P. 134. For instance, in "Iriarte y su Época," p. 399: "así es que dos años después se presentó 'El Café,' el público halló tan insufrible como nosotros hoy su Don Pedro de Aguilar que no cesa de predicarlos"—(the N. C. precepts). Also cf. the author's monograph on María Ladevenant. In work on "La Tirana," Cotarelo y Mori says that the "Comedia Nueva" had no influence, but refers to it as "la admirable sátira dramática," p. 240.

P. 136. Bourgoing, v. I, p. 347. Samaniego makes about the same remarks, p. 90 of ed. by Apraiz. He feels that the "sainetes" emphasize too much the low ideals of certain classes—"Quién duda que á estos modelos se debe también aquel resabio de 'majismo' que afectan hasta las personas más ilustres de la corte?"

P. 138. Ensayo Histórico—Apologético de la Literatura Española contra las opiniones preocupadas de Algunos escritores modernos Italianos. Disertaciones

[211] Cited by Sempere y Guarinos. Ensayo de una Biblioteca, etc., v. VI, pp. 100-102. The last two lines do not seem to have been quoted correctly.

del Abate Don Xavier Lampillas. Traducido del Italiano por Doña Josefa Amor y Borbón. Madrid 1789. 7 vols.

P. 139. Lampillas, Prologue, v. I.—"Igualmente es reprehensible querer que todo lo nuestro sea lo mejor y que por mantener esta necia quimera se han de sucitar frequentes disputas, y turbar las conversaciones si alguno la contradice, mas quando se ofende á la nación entera, quando se quiere creer universal la ignorancia y la barbarie, quando se atribuye á efectos del clima la corrupción de las ciencias; en este caso no puede ser notado de parcial ni preocupado el que toma la defensa de la patria; antes bien lo contrario seria cobardia digna de castigo y el silencio una confirmación del concepto errado en que estaban los contrarios."

P. 140. These statements are quoted by Lampillas, v. II, p. 194, from Tiraboschi: "Esta ingeniosa nación . . . estoy por decir que tiene una propensión casi natural, y como procedida del clima, á las sutilezas, por lo que ha tenido tantos escoláticos famosos y tan pocos oradores y poetas." Bettinelli is quoted, v. I, p. 4: "España es naturalmente inclinada casi por influxo del clima á la sutileza; lo qual es causa de que haya tenido pocos poetas y oradores célebres." It looks very much as if one of these authors had merely copied the other.

P. 142. Linguet, Simon Nicolas Henri, 1736-1794. Famous lawyer who opposed the encyclopedists, defended the Jesuits, tried to play a part in the Revolution and was executed. When in the service of the prince of Beauveau he went to Spain (1762 or 1763) and became so enthusiastic over the works of Lope and Calderón that he translated some of their comedies.

P. 142. Samaniego in his reply to Cosme Damián used as his text these words of Cervantes, Quijote, Part I, ch. xlviii—"Porque los extranjeros, que con mucha punctualidad guarden las leyes de la comedia nos tienen por bárbaros é ignorantes viendo los disparates y absurdos de las que hacemos."

P. 144. "¿Y como es fácil por otra parte que este divino fuego acompañe los espíritus de unas gentes criadas en tierras flojas, pantanosas, faltas de azufre, sales y substancia y tan poco favorecidas del calor de Phebo, que á penas madurarían en muchas de ellas sus frutos, si la industria no les levantase del suelo disponiéndolos de modo que puedan recibir más de lleno los rayos y calor del sol que en no pocas de las Provincias de la Francia, si acaso se descubren tal qual vez, no tienen la bastante fuerza, para fomentar ni dar sazón á la mayor parte de las plantas?

"De este principio y causa natural proviene aquella mediocridad que se observa en las más Obras de ingenio de los Franceses quienes seguramente jamás alcanzaron en la Poesía y Eloquencia más que aquella medianía correcta propia de ingenios débiles y poco vigorosos." Prólogo, pp. 52-53.

P. 144. Huerta, Prólogo, p. 105. The linguistic limitations of Voltaire in Spanish and in other tongues are commented upon in no measured terms by Giuseppe Baretti in the "Frusta letteraria," No. 8, v. I of "Opere," p. 249:—"Voltaire ha voluto trinciarla da gran sultano in lingua toscana, sentenziando assai volte ora in favore e ora contro di noi. Ma quelle sue sentenze . . . o in favore o contro che ne fossero . . . provano molto evidentemente, che Voltaire sa poco più toscano di quel que basti para capire che Gerusalemme Liberata vuol dir Jérusalem Délivrée . . . Voltaire sa la lingua italiana a un dipresso come sa la giapponese. La poca fedeltà di Voltaire nel tradurre un passo tratto dall' 'Araucana' d'Ercilla, e l' invocazione alle Ninfe del Tago da esso fatta di propria invenzione, e quindi supposta a Camõens, mi sono, come dissi già, convicentissime prove, ch' egli intende

lo spagnuolo e il portoghese quanto gli elefanti del gran Mogollo." Continues to prove that Voltaire's knowledge of English was equally uncertain. Quoted by D'Ancona e Baccí. V. IV, p. 375.

P. 146. Answer to Cosme Damián. Note to page xxx. On "La Numancia" . . . "mezcla de personas reales y alegóricas que mancomuna en la acción. Los personages con nombre propio ascienden al número de 20 sin contar un Muerto que sale de su sepultura y después de decir treinta y dos endecasílabos se vuelve á embocar en ella" . . . ambassadors, governors—("los que hablan mucho más") 2 priests, 4 women, etc., etc.

P. 146. Ibid., p. xi. "No apruebo las Comedias desatinadas, esto es aquellas en que se hallan las monstruosidades que Cervantes censura; las comedias de mi Colección no tienen ni tendrán semejantes absurdos."

P. 146. Huerta, in addition to the slur cast at Signorelli which we have already quoted, had said when dealing with the antiquity of the Spanish stage: "pero yo no habiendo jamás dudado que nuestro Theatro fué el primero que aparecó más correcto en Europa despues del restablecimiento de las letras y no habiendo ya ningún preocupado Francés ni Italiano (que es más) que no confiese esta verdad a pesar de las garrulidades con que el Doctor Signorelli quiso sostener la negativa en algún tiempo." (Cosme Damián, p. xvi.)

P. 147. Signorelli, p. 65. . . . "io stimo che non mai quest' erudito da buon senno prestò fede egli stesso a quel che si sforzò di persuadere agli altri."

P. 148. Réponse à la Question "Que doit-on à l'Espagne." Discours lu à l'Académie de Berlin dans l'Assemblée publique du 26 Janvier 1786 pour le jour de l'Anniversaire du Roi. Par Mr. L'Abbé Denina. Printed in Madrid, pp. 1-19.

P. 148. Denina, p. 20. "Mais n'est-ce pas après son retour de Madrid qu'il s'attacha à faire fleurir ces arts, soit qu'il les ait trouvés déjà plus avancés en Espagne, soit que les réflexions qu'il eut le loisir de faire aient dû le porter à chercher la gloire dans les arts pacifiques plutôt que dans les entreprises militaires?"

P. 149. Réponse à la question, etc., Part XI, p. 82. "La ciencia legítima debe consistir en saber qué debe á su ánimo, qué á su cuerpo; ó lo que es lo mismo, cómo ha de mantener la recta constitución de su ser, etc." Religion and morals are the perfecting powers of man; Spain is in these supreme, hence is supreme in science.

P. 150. El Censor—Obra Periódica. Madrid, 1781. Defends rationalism in Literature, then uses rationalism to preach political doctrines distinctly socialistic and revolutionary. French "encyclopédisme" and "esprit philosophique" quite undiluted.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Last Stages of the Neo-Classic Movement. Jovellanos and Samaniego.

Our study of the literary skirmishing which the misdirected interest of certain foreigners brought about as soon as it came to the notice of jingoistic Spaniards has made us deal with a series of men none of whom were endowed with talents which could raise them very much above mediocrity. These men of small parts easily resolved themselves into two classes. One of these may be typified by García de la Huerta, for whom neo-classicism was a foreign thing, and, as such, intolerable. The other class was made up of journalists of the type of Clavijo y Fajardo who viewed all artistic matters through the peep hole of pure reason and for whom, naturally, what was not neo-classic in literature was bad.

While this uncompromising attitude was always more marked among the lesser lights engaged in the neo-classic controversy it will not do to make it typical of them alone. To be sure, at the beginning of that literary quarrel, and also in its advanced stages, during the reign of Charles III, we have met over and over again with marked examples of liberality and freedom from dogmatism in the leaders of the neo-classic movement.

As the end of the century drew nearer and as the higher class of Spaniards became more and more cosmopolitan, this tendency to literary liberalism waned perceptibly. The leaders of the movement lost more and more their sympathy towards the old Castilian literary genres, growing proportionately more rigid in the application of the neo-classic tenets.

As a matter of fact, the men who led the movement during the last few years of the century exhibited a narrow-mindedness as great as that shown by the least sympathetic foreigners who had, at an earlier date, undertaken to show to enlightened Europe the deplorable state of literature in the peninsula.

Among these leaders who lay prone before the Goddess Reason were men of such unquestionable superiority as Jovellanos and Samaniego.

Jovellanos.—Jovellanos has remained as the most perfect type of "philosophe" produced by Spain. As a writer of tragic plays, as a philanthropist, as a practical man of science and as a statesman with strong

tendencies to liberalism, he personified the best and most advanced forms of the various intellectual movements which had modified Spanish life gradually throughout the eighteenth century. His advanced views in social and political matters did not prevent his being a most patriotic Spaniard, and his extremely severe attitude toward the literary past of his country was simply a form of his patriotism.

Though consistently patriotic, the views of Jovellanos had not been consistently extreme throughout his career. While still a young man he had been led to make the customary defense of the Spanish drama because it fell to his lot to meet personally with the impertinence of a typical French critic of that period.

This occurred in 1777 and arose from the correspondence which Jovellanos had with one Valcrestien who had translated into French his "Delincuente Honrado." Valcrestien felt that the character of Don Simón, in the play of Jovellanos, was not sufficiently consistent with itself, and that the last act was too slow in its development. He had graciously mended these slight defects and in his letter to the author, to pour oil on the wounds possibly caused by his action, he had said in a patronizing tone "votre pièce est trop bònne pour lui laisser aucun défaut." *

This done, the Frenchman who had visited Spain at an earlier period proceeded to pass the usual condemnations on the Spanish stage in terms which showed but too clearly his inability to understand the truly great qualities of the Spanish dramatic genius.

Jovellanos, without losing his temper under the pressure of such an accumulation of impertinences, replied with modesty on the points touching his play and with marked impartiality on the general subject of the Spanish stage. Had the worthy foreigner asked the help of those who were qualified to guide him in his literary investigation, he would have been directed to the best works of Calderón, Moreto, Zamora, and Cañízares. Instead he merely attended the public theatres of the day and looked for the Spanish form of "bon goût" from those who did not possess the elements of it, that is from the vulgar and the kind of drama that satisfied it. "Del buen, ó mal gusto de una nación no deben decidir las ideas del vulgo sino las de las personas cultas y literatas. En todas partes el vulgo es ciego y mal estimador de las cosas que no conoce: y yo juzgo que la diferencia entre una nación generalmente culta y otra que no lo es del todo no consiste en que la primera tenga buen gusto, y la segunda no, sino que en la una el buen gusto esté más propagado que en la otra; ó lo que viene á ser lo mismo, que en una haya más vulgo y en otra menos." [212]

[212] Jovellanos, v. VII, p. 111.

Thus Jovellanos defends his country and, at the same time, admits the truth of the traditional accusations made against its literature. His state of mind does not differ materially from that of many of the neo-classic leaders whom we have considered so far. Wherein he does show some originality is in his exposing without any reservations the detrimental effect on Spanish letters of the prominence given to the lower classes in the field of literary criticism. The intellectual lower class is still numerous and active; it is more than a match for the few partisans of good taste. Still the day is coming when the trained and thoughtful classes will make their standards prevail over the enthusiastic but misguided judgments of the present rulers of the Spanish Parnassus. "Son más en numero, están bien hallados con él, (el mal gusto) se burlan de los que piensan de otro modo y los señalan con el dedo. En fin, entre Vds. quién combate las preocupaciones comunes es un hombre celoso, entre nosotros suele pasar por entusiasta. Pero esto pasará. La luz de la ilustración no tiene un movimiento tan rápido como la del sol; pero cuando una vez ha rayado sobre algún hemisferio, se difunde, aunque lentamente, hasta llenar los más lejanos horizontes; y ó yo conozco mal mi nación, ó este fenómeno va ya apareciendo en ella." [213]

This optimism of Jovellanos, who in 1777 was ready to defend at least parts of the national drama, seems to have received some severe blows during the two decades that followed.

In the semi-official document in which in 1790 he had studied the possibility of a legal and governmental control of the dramatic activities of the city of Madrid, we find that Jovellanos has been compelled, by the logic of the situation, to accept conclusions which he surely would not have countenanced when his faith in pure reason was not yet fully developed.

As a matter of fact, in this "Memoria"* we are rather amazed to find that Jovellanos, whose theories seemed quite reasonable in 1777, has been driven by logical deductions from his premises to a position of incredible narrowness. Had Jovellanos simply stated his lack of sympathy with the ideals of the illiterate or uneducated classes, no intelligent person could have found fault with an attitude which merely resolved itself into a preference for higher as against lower standards of art. But the minute that Jovellanos passed from theoretical discussions to an attempt to apply his principles we find that he became very narrow and exhibited a tendency to real tyranny.

From the reading of the "Memoria," it becomes evident that Jovellanos had at that date reached conclusions similar to the opinions of the

[213] Jovellanos, v. VII, p. 111. Letter dated Sept. 13, 1777. Sevilla.

opponents of the Abbé Denina who felt that, while there was much in Spanish civilization that deserved praise, praise was not what the emergency of the moment demanded. What was needed was blame, severe and unrestricted.

To Jovellanos then, the enumeration of the good qualities of great Spanish writers only served to strengthen the faith of the common people in the excellence of the inferior authors whom they admired, while criticism of their faults passed absolutely unnoticed. In dealing with minds who, out of a fair argument, picked out only those parts which favored their position, quite ignoring the others, reasonable and fair as they might be, the only method of procedure was to adopt an attitude equally unfair. Thus in the "Memoria" we have an attack on the Spanish drama more complete and more relentless than any other which we have met so far. Jovellanos, like the editors of the "Diario," found it impossible to keep to a moderate course as soon as he passed from theory to practice. In an eloquent passage preceding the discussion of practical methods of control over the theatres, Jovellanos brands the Spanish stage of the sixteenth century as a school of immorality and folly, exclaiming at the end of his arraignment: "Confesémoslo de buena fé, un teatro tal es una peste pública, y el Gobierno no tiene más alternativa que reformarle, ó proscribirle para siempre!* . . ." "Es por lo mismo necesario," he adds later, "sustituir á estos dramas otros capaces de deleitar, instruir, presentando ejemplos y documentos que perfeccionen el espíritu y el corazón. . . . He aquí el grande objeto de la legislación. Perfeccionar en todas sus partes este espectáculo, formando un teatro donde puedan verse contínuos y heroicos ejemplos de reverencia al ser supremo, y á la religión de nuestros padres, de amor á la patría. . . . Los medios no son difíciles . . . establézcanse dos premios anuales de cien doblones, y una medalla de oro." [214] . . . Now we have it! This is the lowest ebb to which pitiless logic could drag the neo-classic ideas. The state, legislation, wise counselors, all the sanctimonious apparatus of paternalism, the surest methods to throttle art, are called up to the rescue of Spain.

Luzán had already hinted at the advisability of governmental interference in literary matters pure and simple. This tendency had reappeared with N. F. de Moratín, who had brought about the abolishing of a whole genre by law. It reached its full development in the plan of Jovellanos who, in his turn, called on the government to reinstate art by ordinances and by offering rewards to those writers who would follow the paths proved by reason and authority to be the proper ones.

This attempt to prop up the neo-classic reforms, not by persuasion

[214] Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 83.

and gradual education, but by way of governmental interference, discredits the whole movement in our own eyes. We may well imagine how disastrous to its success was the effect on contemporaries. Neo-classicism became synonymous with petty tyranny and the basest form of administrative prosiness. Its natural opponents who had attacked it merely because of its foreign origin had at last a mighty weapon to wield against it. Their party gained in dignity in proportion as neo-classicism was belittled by this mention of governmental tutelage.

Yet many of the reforms suggested by Jovellanos were most reasonable and most necessary. For instance, we can not but praise him for hinting that if the spectators who had to stand by the hour in the "patio" were provided with decent seats, the rowdyism which prevailed so often in that part of the audience would naturally disappear.* His attack on scenery was but the echo of the complaint on the subject begun by Montiano and was undoubtedly warranted. His plan to make playhouses financially independent can not but receive the highest praise. But how unfortunate to have relied so much on the government and to have suggested that the glorious drama of Spain could be replaced by the works of authors in whom inspiration could be awakened by offers of medals and of purses of gold!

There is apparently an amazing contradiction in the essay of Jovellanos. Before coming to the enumeration of the many ways by means of which the stage ought to be checked and controlled by the government, he had described vividly the depressing effect on the common people caused by an excess of police regulations.

While dealing with the general subject of amusements, he had pointed out that in certain rural districts, holidays were turned into days of gloom by needless ordinances which interfered with the peasants' right to gather in groups, to dance or to sing in public. Just for that reason, said Jovellanos, many of the most important feast days were spent unattended by any real jollity. "En los días solemnes en vez de alegría y bullicio que debieran anunciar el contento de sus moradores, reina en las calles y plazas una perezosa inacción, un triste silencio, que no se pueden advertir sin admiración ni lástima. Si algunas personas salen de sus casas, no parece sino que el tedio y la ociosidad las echan fuera de ellas, y las arrastran al ejido, al humilladero, á la plaza ó al pórtico de la iglesia, donde, embozados en sus capas, ó al arrimo de alguna esquina, ó sentados, ó vagando acá y acullá sin objeto ni propósito determinado pasan tristemente las horas y las tardes enteras sin espaciarse ni divertirse." [215]

In describing these solemn feasts which remind one vaguely of the

[215] Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 60.

old-fashioned New England Sunday, Jovellanos does not seem to have realized that he was describing in a masterly way the state of mind of the men and women who would gather before the footlights of his ideal government-regulated theatre.

In his pity for the brow-beaten rustics, he had exclaimed: "No ha menester que el Gobierno le divierta, pero sí que le deje divertirse." [216]

This contradiction, however, is only apparent. Jovellanos had come to the conclusion that theatrical performances were not a fitting form of amusement for the common people. Dramatic performances require too much time from those who are to earn their living with their own hands. Let their amusements be dancing and singing in the open, amusements which need imply no prolonged idleness and which cost nothing. If the common people insist on going to plays, it will be the best thing for them in the last analysis if they are made as uncomfortable as possible. Moreover, if the price of admission were raised, many would be kept away from a form of entertainment which was harmful to them and which they helped to degrade by their actions: "Yo no pretendo cerrar á nadie sus puertas: estén enhorabuena abiertas á todo el mundo, pero conviene dificultar indirectamente la entrada á la gente pobre que vive de su trabajo, para la cual el tiempo es dinero y el teatro más casto y depurado una distracción perniciosa. He dicho que el pueblo no necesita espectáculos; ahora digo que le son dañosos, sin esceptuar siquiera el de la Corte. . . . Quizá vendrá un día de tanta perfección para nuestra escena que pueda presentar hasta en el género infimo y grosero, no solo una diversión inocente y sencilla, sino también instructiva y provechosa. Entonces acaso convendrá establecer teatros baratos y vastísimos para divertir en días festivos al pueblo de las grandes capitales. Pero este momento está muy distante de nosotros, y el acelerarle puede ser muy arriesgado; quédense pues las esperanzas y bienes deseados." [217]

In such words as these Jovellanos reveals to us one of the characteristics of the neo-classic movement which so far had been kept pretty well out of sight. We refer to its intrinsically aristocratic nature. It was primarily the quarrel of the few who had had special educational advantages against the many who had remained in ignorance. The movement in its theoretical stages did not show any scorn of the common people. Quite to the contrary, neo-classic critics loved to enlarge on the unmatched opportunity which the drama offered to rulers for the moral teaching of the masses. Good plays were fountains of wisdom and virtue from which humanity in its entirety could drink deep inspiration. But again on pass-

[216] Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 60.
[217] Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 93.

ing from theory to practice, the leaders of the movement found themselves compelled to establish a number of "distinguos" which ended by sharply dividing humanity into those who could and those who could not benefit by the higher forms of art even when they were made to express the purest moral teachings.*

Thus in the last analysis, with superior men like Jovellanos as with the small fry of the neo-classic system of criticism, society was bound to be divided off into the fit and the unfit, the chosen few and the common herd, and it is no wonder that the common herd, what with its hatred of foreign things and what with its intuition of the slight which the system was bound to inflict upon it, stubbornly refused to countenance neo-classicism. The common people realized well enough that the more they accepted its tenets, the more they put themselves in a condition of inferiority towards the rest of society.

Samaniego.—In the critical writings of Samaniego [218] we find expressed with equal vim the ideas professed by Jovellanos. The fabulist, however, did not have the same reasons for believing in the efficiency of legislation as did the statesman and we find that Samaniego relies in his campaign mainly on irony, the classical weapon of literary reformers in Spain.

How bitter and cutting Samaniego's irony could be, poor Iriarte, who had offended him in the preface to the first edition of his fables, had found out at his own expense. This dangerous gift of his Samaniego used in the neo-classic controversy to reply to Huerta's strange prologue, to undermine the hope still cherished by some that Spanish literature contained undiscovered treasures of regular plays and finally to ridicule the enormous display of clap-trap and machinery required by the contemporary Comedia.

In poking fun at the childish parallel made by Huerta between the sulphurless soil of France and that nation's insipid literature, Samaniego seems to have hit on the main fallacy of all arguments which tend to explain away differences in temperament by purely physical causes. After a mock-heroic passage in which he extols the virtues of the Spanish soil and the Spanish sun and in which he shows how Spaniards may become full of genius merely by breathing the nutritious air of their country and allowing its sunlight to shine on their pates, Samaniego exclaims: "¡Entonces, entonces! sí que los frutos del ingenio, considerados (por decirlo así) físicamente, pues que en ellos sólo contaríamos con la influencia del clima; entonces, vuelvo á decir una y mil veces, entonces sí que

[218] Obras criticas de Don Félix María de Samaniego. Precedidas de unos Estudios Preliminares escritos por Julián Apraiz. Bilbao, 1898.

las producciones de nuestra imaginación serían garrafaíes! La misma diferencia habría de una comedia francesa á otra española que la que va de un melón de Valencia á otro melón de Burdeos, ó de un cuerno de Medellín á otro cuerno de Oloron." [219]

Although Samaniego is not as openly aristocratic as Jovellanos, we find in him the same spirit which caused Cadalso to ridicule the angel Gabriel and his wooden retainers, and this spirit is merely the ironical attitude arising in the man of the world where he happens to be witnessing the simple amusements of the "menu peuple." Says Samaniego. speaking of the average popular "comedia": "El crujir de las cuerdas, el golpeo de los contrapesos, el ruido de las ruedas y poleas, y toda la faena de los diestros maquinistas se perciben por lo menos desde las cuatro calles. Así se logra que hasta los pápanes de Mahodres conozcan cómo se hacen estas diabluras; y reducido el arte á principios fáciles y sencillos vivimos seguros de que nunca nos faltan tramoyistas, y lo que es más, de que la Inquisición se puede meter con ellos." [220]

On the more serious side of the question, we find that Samaniego summarizes in an unusually full way the various points of the neo-classic controversy which had been thrashed out during the century. "¿Qué literato no conocerá que nada hay comparable en el teatro francés, ni aun en el griego, á la viveza de colorido y la expressión de la verdad con que se hallan retratados en nuestras comedias de figurón algunos de los diferentes caracteres ridículos y extravagantes de los hombres? Seamos pues, sinceros: confesemos las ventajas y desventajas de nuestro teatro: hagamos saber al mundo ilustrado, que en España no todos hacemos apologías del error y del disparate." [221]

The only original contribution made by Samaniego to the arguments pro and con which we have had to repeat so often in the course of this study is the one that an attack on bad Comedia, far from being an attack on the Spanish mind, is really a way to redeem its reputation. "Los dramas mejores, absolutamente hablando, son siempre los que más divierten; y es hacer una horrenda injuria á nuestro pueblo el asegurar que sólo se puede divertir con representaciones torpes, groseras o ridículas." [222]

Other quotations could be brought forth to prove how completely the critical ideas of Samaniego summed up the neo-classic system consid-

[219] Samaniego, etc., p. 73. Quoted from Continuación de las Memorias Críticas por Cosme Damián.

[220] Samaniego, p. 95. Quoted from Carta sobre el Teatro in "Censor," v. XCII. Madrid, 1786, p. 95.

[221] Ibid., p. 75. Cosme Damián.

[222] Samaniego. Carta Sobre el Teatro, p. 86.

ered in the complete state of development which it had reached towards the end of the eighteenth century. One passage of the letter written by the fabulist to "El Censor" in 1786 is probably the source used by L. F. de Moratín for the lines of the "Comedia Nueva" in which Don Pedro solemnly warns his audience of the close connection existing between the real greatness of a nation and that of its literature.* In the "Continuación de las Memorias Críticas por Cosme Damián" we find a sketch of the arguments drawn by N. F. de Moratín from Luzán to the effect that the rules are universal and immortal and that neither imagination nor fancy can rightly prevail against them. Again in another instance, we find Samaniego repeating the type of praise of Spanish literature which we met in the "Arte Poética" and in the "Diario" and which we have read in Bourgoing's account of the Spanish drama. In brief, as we have seen that every neo-classic critic since Luzán had echoed the ideas of that leader first of all, then had tried rather feebly to say something new, so we find that Samaniego is primarily a faithful echo of the whole movement as it stood at the end of the century.*

If he does add a new element besides the one mentioned above, it is along the line already defined by Jovellanos, that is, along the line of dividing the Spanish public into an aristocratic group into whom good taste had already been inculcated and a popular group which had everything to learn in such matters.

Moral teaching, according to the early leaders of the neo-classic movement, was to be the aim of literature and particularly of the drama. Its possibilities as a social force and as a source of refinement and polish had not been considered very seriously at first.

Samaniego, who as an admirer and an imitator of the "Philosophes," was not above suspicion in his attitude towards religion, was willing to put the social and esthetic rôle of the drama on a par with its duty to teach or safeguard morality. "No baste que el teatro instruya, es menester también que pula y que cultive." [223]

As we have been approaching the end of the eighteenth century we have found that evidences of the wide spread of neo-classicism grew enormously in number.

To deal only with the important names, we might add to Jovellanos and Samaniego, Quintana and the whole poetical school (so-called) of Valencia. Had we aimed to compile a catalogue of quotations from arguments in favor of neo-classicism, we could have filled portfolios with excerpts from "El Pensador," "El Censor," "El Memorial Literario."

Nothing could have been more futile than such a course. The neo-

[223] Samaniego, p. 86.

classicists whom we shall not study differed in no way from those who have been the object of our investigation, and we know but too well how uniform and monotonous the majority of these gentlemen have proved to be in their trains of thought and in their arguments.

We might faithfully analyze the "Poética" of Quintana and receive no greater reward for our troubles than if we had studied his regular tragedies.*

Likewise to attempt to give an account of the journalistic debates in the eighties and nineties in a way that could command the interest of even the most generous reader is a feat which we feel in no way capable of accomplishing. The only feeling that such a piece of drudgery could awaken would be one of amazement at the infinite capacity of certain individuals for repeating, as if they had discovered them, truths or principles which have long been classified as platitudes.*

As a matter of fact, so far as the important and useful elements of our study are concerned, we have come to the end of our labors. We have followed the spread of the neo-classic spirit from its start to the time when it had been disseminated among all classes of Spanish society as broadly as it lay in its nature to be disseminated.

An attempt to present more in detail the documents and the arguments of this final dissemination would compel us to enter into a series of repetitions which in irksomeness would quite eclipse those which it has been our lot to commit in the course of this study.

Rather than lose ourselves in a mass of petty and inconclusive details, let us be satisfied in indicating briefly and in broad lines the development of the neo-classic movement from the end of the eighteenth century to the beginning of the Romantic movement.

First of all let us deal with the trend of ideas in the field of literary criticism.

The Evolution of the Neo-Classic Opposition.—Neo-classicism, as we have said, had reached the end of its development with the end of the century. It had been stated completely and all classes of society had been made acquainted with its tenets. The purely theoretical writings of L. F. de Moratín, of Martinez de la Rosa, and of Quintana testify once for all to this condition of complete development. They prove with equal conclusiveness the fundamental incompatibility which separated the popular mind in Spain from the aristocratic ideals of neo-classicism. In themselves, these works offer no interest. It was by the reaction that so much dogma aroused that these last great neo-classic documents came to have an influence on literary criticism.

We have seen in the course of our study how at each new develop-

ment of the neo-classic propaganda there arose a number of writers who stood against it, not so much in the name of art as in that of patriotism.

At first this opposition was merely an outburst of anger against a party which put foreign ideals above those of the mother country. The opposition to neo-classicism was then emotional in its nature and conspicuously lacked solidity. As the fight progressed, the emotional element continued preeminent but the opponents of neo-classicism perceived at last that, even from a purely rational standpoint, the position of their enemies was not unassailable. Instead of indulging exclusively in denunciations of the innovators they gradually set themselves to introducing elements of rationality in their arguments.

To be sure, García de la Huerta was mainly vituperative, yet we saw that he made use of neo-classicism in his attack against Cervantes and that he delighted in inventing a parallel between the literature of France and that country's climate. Lampillas, by attempting to view Spanish literature from a comparative standpoint, made a dignified defense of the Spanish stage a possibility. To be brief, in proportion as the neo-classic critics grew smug and self-satisfied, their opponents grew in experience and in capacity.

The Romantic opposition which, as Menéndez y Pelayo points out, had with more or less success stood out at all times against the neo-classic movement, had gained steadily in strength. By the beginning of the nineteenth century it had become a force to be reckoned with. It presented no longer a form of explosive indignation but a body of clear ideas infinitely more intelligent and far-sighted than those which made up the bulk of the neo-classic argumentation. This so-called Romantic opposition had become a manner of compromise in which reason held an important place while national traits received due consideration.

Menéndez y Pelayo has given a careful account of the works of the main exponents of this growing school of criticism. It is only for the sake of completeness that we shall mention briefly here the more important names which are treated quite fully in the sixth volume of the "Ideas Estéticas."

Eximeneo, for instance, attacked the three unities in a very able and rational way. He felt certain that, had England weighed down the genius of its writers with these conventions, there would have been no Shakespeare, and that with such shackles the greatness of Lope would never have made itself known.[224] This critic, to be sure, had no love for Calderon's diction, and his opinions, if we omit those dealing with the unities, were after all not far from those of Luzán.

[224] Ideas Estéticas, v. VI, p. 34.

Much less conventional in their judgments and more typical of this new Spanish school of good sense were the two writers, Berguizas and Estala.

Berguizas, who wrote about at the time when La Harpe lectured, was a true classicist. He dared attack periphrasis and outlined the arguments in favor of taking into consideration the times, the country and the race in arriving at literary judgments. To quote Menéndez y Pelayo: "Sostiene que ni en hebreo ni en griego fueron nunca bajas las expresiones, 'asno fuerte, mi asta ó mi cuerno, el ombligo de la tierra' . . . ni debe parecer disonancia el que se compare á una mujer hermosa con una yegua." [225]

Estala saw before Schlegel that the ancient and the modern tragedy had nothing in common. Instead of breaking into wordy rhapsodies on the neglected beauties of Lope and Calderón, he makes a straightforward attack on the theories of "illusion" and of "imitation," that is, he proceeds to pull down the very keynote of the neo-classic arch. To quote again from "Las Ideas Estéticas": "A fuerza de analizar, y de querer reducir las imitaciones á los originales, aniquilan las bellas artes . . . y ¿qué ha resultado de este principio tan absurdo? De él ha nacido aquella voz insensata y quimérica de ilusión: se pretende hallar ilusión en la pintura, ilusión en la escultura y mil ilusiónes en la dramática . . . Ningún espectador sensato puede padecer ilusión, ni por un momento, en el teatro: sabe que ha ido á ver una representación, no un hecho verdadero; lo material del edificio, los mismos espectadores le están continuamente advirtiendo esta vertad . . .; la imitación es absolutamente distinta de la verdad . . . las bellas artes ni aspiran, ni deben, ni pueden aspirar á causar ilusión, siendo la ilusión una quimera, un parto monstruoso de la más profunda ignorancia de los principios, un absurdo de que no se halla rastro en la antigüedad y un manantial fecundo de errores." [226]

From such quotations as the foregoing we see that the clash between the two literary factions had resulted in giving rise to ideas on literary criticism which were in no way contemptible. As a matter of fact the modern reader is amazed more than once to meet in the writings of these Spaniards, statements of ideas of which he had been accustomed to think as having arisen only with the Schlegel brothers and the other early Romantic critics.

Though the final result of these discussions helped to start in Spain a trend towards modern criticism, neither the neo-classic party nor that

[225] Ideas Estéticas, v. VI, p. 73.
[226] Ideas Estéticas, v. VI, p. 80.

standing for national traits was able to pull Spain out of the slough of artistic impotence in which it had been floundering since the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The aristocratic tendencies, which we saw so distinctly in the works of Jovellanos, at last united with the desire for governmental interference, which is pretty sure to spring up in the hearts of reformers when they come to realize that their propaganda is not making much headway.

First a censorship of the stage had been established, then a board to replace the municipal control of playhouses was organized. No one will ever know just why it was that a military officer was made president of this organization, which had absolute sway not only over the business part of theatrical administration, but also over the personnel of companies and the kind of plays which should or should not be presented to the public. Moratín, who had just been made director of the board, could not get along with his warrior chief and resigned, only to be made "corrector" of comedies. His duty was to modify those plays of the old Spanish repertoire which, with a few alterations, could be made presentable to an audience composed of representatives of the "honnête homme" species of the genus homo.

As a result of so much official activity, over six hundred "comedias," some of them the very flower of the classic stage of Spain, were condemned as unfit to be presented to the public.[227] Translators of foreign plays were so stimulated that the playhouses were fairly flooded with tragedies from all over Europe. A few old plays were successfully modified and acted.[228] Yet, in spite of such a wealthy repertoire, actors and public uttered loud protests. The former plied their trade only when on the verge of starvation and, as there was no adequate way of driving audiences into the theatres, these soon ran into debt and, before long, the Junta had to resign to avoid greater financial calamities.

Certain Spanish writers have taken very much to heart this tyrannical sway brought on the playhouses of Madrid by the fanaticism of the neoclassicists.

The Junta was most certainly an incredibly stupid form of governmental meddling but, on the other hand, it did no harm to dramatic art since such art did not exist.

Before the Junta, as during and after its brief reign, the repertoire of the Madrid theatres remained just about the same. With some of the

[227] Among them "La Vida es Sueño," "El Príncipe Constante," "El Májico Prodigioso," "El Tejedor de Segovia," "El Convidado de Piedra."

[228] Especially "La Estrella de Sevilla," modified by Trigueros in 1800. (Revista de Archivos—Julio—Agosto, 1912, article entitled: Menéndez y Pelayo y la Dramática Nacional.)

popular productions of the great writers of the seventeenth century there was played a multitude of plebeian abortions coming from the pens of such impossible writers as Comella, and foreign translations abounded.

As a matter of fact, the neo-classic drama, throughout the end of the eighteenth century and through the first quarter of the nineteenth had every possible opportunity to show whether or no it was able to command the interest of Spanish audiences. Its utter failure to do so is not surprising to us if we only stop to read the names of the foreign authors whose works were set forth as models of the dramatic art. They explain easily enough the stubborn resistance of both players and public to this foreign invasion.

To be sure, all such importations were not French. Among their numbers figure some of the works of Shakespeare, Metastasio, Goldoni and Alfieri, but Shakespeare was known only through the adaptation of Ducis which gained nothing in being translated into Spanish. As for the Italian plays, what their translators saw in them was first of all their regularity.

The small fry of the decadent French classicism together with Voltaire supplied by far the larger part of the plays intended to take the place of the extravagant as well as of the admirable productions of the Spanish drama.

In the frequent mentions of such plays made by Cotarelo y Mori in his various works on the dramatic art of the period we meet such names as Andrieux, Lemercier, Arnaud, Brifaut, and even such a writer as Pixérécourt found translators.

The name of Brifaut gains fame in this connection. That writer is of course remembered mainly for the facility with which, upon recommendation by the government, he changed his Spanish tragedy "Don Sanche" to an Oriental play. The operation was a simple one, consisting mainly in modifying the names of the characters and in placing the scene on eastern instead of western shores of the Mediterranean.

"Don Sanche" under its new title, "Ninus II.," was translated and slightly condensed by a capable Spaniard.[229] The play which under its first name might have strained the diplomatic relations between France and Spain was under its disguise heartily received by the latter. As a matter of fact it scored a tremendous success and brought some consolation to the neo-classic partisans. "La obra tuvo éxito fabuloso con grandes entradas," says Cotarelo y Mori, who feels that the Spanish version of Brifaut's play is still in our days a most readable tragedy.

[229] Cotarelo y Mori, Isidoro Maiquez, p. 436. The translator of Brifaut's play was José Joaquín de Mora.

In spite of occasional successes scored by the supporters of this wholesale literary importation and in spite of Moratín's comedies, the average run of plays given in these days of literary chaos is depressingly low.

It is clear enough to us who have the advantage of proper perspective, that when it came to a matter of practical application, the neo-classicists and their opponents were merely rivals in impotence.

The mob in the "patio" might well express its indignation quite uninterruptedly and, from the very nature of the existing conditions, its judgments could not very well help being correct.

If in the general confusion it hissed Moratín's "El Barón" off the stage we can not really blame it very seriously. We are rather filled with admiration at the discrimination it showed in the case of the "Mogigata" which it treated kindly and in that of the "Sí de las Niñas" which it greeted with genuine enthusiasm.

But we are now distinctly beyond the limits of our subject. These matters belong to the literary history of the nineteenth century and since, except for the literary criticism of the opposition, our movement has ended in sterility on the one hand and in chaos on the other, we may well consider our task completed. Let us therefore turn our attention to the neo-classic movement as a whole.

It may be that a retrospective view of our field of study may lend it a dignity which from a purely esthetic standpoint it certainly does not possess.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII.

P. 156. Colección de varias obras en Prosa y Verso del Ex'mo Señor Don Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos. (Adicionada con algunas notas por D. Ramón Marcía Cañedo.) Madrid, 1830. 7 vols. V. VII, p. 107.

P. 157. Memoria para el arreglo de la Policía de los espectáculos y diversiones públicas, y sobre su origen en España. V. IV of edition cited.

P. 158. Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 57. "¿Cómo es posible alucinarse sobre una cuestión de hecho, en la cual la asistencia de una semana al teatro vale más que todos los miserables argumentos empleados en su favor, y aun más también que las vagas declamaciones y el fastidioso fárrago de centones y lugares comunes con que los moralistas han combatido lo que no conocieron?" . . . Speaks of the good work done by the criticism of "Cervantes, Luzán, Nasarre, Valdeflores (Velázquez), Pensador, Censor, Memorial Literario, La Espigadera y otros muchos que como filósofos, como críticos ó como políticos, trataron este punto. . . . Por lo que á mi toca no hay prueba tan decisiva de la corrupción de nuestro gusto, y de la depravación de nuestras ideas, como la fría indiferencia con que dejamos representar unos dramas en que el pudor, la caridad, la buena fé, la decencia, y

todas las máximas re noble y buena educación, son abiertamente conculcadas. ¿Si se cree por ventura que la inocente puericia, la ardiente juventud, la ociosa y regalada nobleza, el ignorante vulgo pueden ver sin peligro tantos ejemplos de impudencia y grosería, de unfanía y necio pundonor, de desacato á la justicia y á las leyes, de infidelidad á las obligaciones públicas y domésticas, puestos en acción, pintados con colores más vivos y animados con el encanto de la ilusión, y con las gracias de la poesía y de la música? Confesésmolo de buena fé, etc." Again, p. 77: "La reforma de nuestro teatro debe empezar por el destierro de casi todos los dramas que están sobre la escena." Not merely the modern senseless productions, "hablo también de aquellas justamente celebradas entre nostros, que algún día sirvieron de modelo á otras naciones, y que la porción más cuerda é ilustrada de la nuestra ha visto siempre y vé todavía con entusiasmo y delicia. Seré siempre el primero á confesar sus bellezas inimitables, la novedad de su invención, la belleza de su estilo, la fluidez y naturalidad de su diálogo, etc., etc. ¿Pero que importa, si estos mismos dramas mirados á la luz de los preceptos y principalmente á la sana razón, están plagados de vicios y defectos que la moral y la política no pueden tolerar?"

P. 159. Jovellanos, v. IV, p. 90. Seating everybody will bring about the disappearance of the shameful "diferencia que la situación establece entre los espectadores; todos estarán sentados, todos á gusto, todos de buen humor; no habrá pues que temer el menor desorden."

P. 161. Jovellanos, like nearly all the other writers of his school, gave his treatise on the rules of Aristotle. It can be found in v. VI of his works, p. 65, and in his essay entitled "Rudimento de Gramática General ó sea Introducción al estudio de las Lenguas." Admits that the unities may be stretched at times but that the closer they are adhered to the nearer will the author come to perfection.

P. 163. P. 83: "Sin embargo ningún objeto es más importante, más digno de censura, ni más necesitado de ella. El crédito y a caso la felicidad de la Nación, las ideas, los usos, las costumbres de sus individuos: la honestidad, la humanidad, la sólida piedad, la verdadera gloria, el honor, el patriotismo, todas las virtudes naturales, morales y civiles se interesan en su reforma y claman altamente por ella. No hay condición, estado, edad, ni sexo que no le frecuente, que no reciba en él lecciones y que no pueda beber en esta fuente ó la ponzoña del error ó las aguas de la buena y saludable doctrina."

P. 163. Samaniego, pp. 70-74: "Estas leyes son eternas, universales, propias de todos los tiempos y países, de que ninguno tiene, á lo menos hasta ahora el privilegio de dispensarse; y que finalmente, el plan, el interés y la invención de cualquiera de estas composiciones deben sujetarse á los principios invariables ya señalados, quedando sólo al autor la libertad en la distribución de los adornos de cada parte, según las circunstancias particulares del objeto que se propone y de carácter que aquellos á quienes se dirige." And p. 74: "¿Qué literato no conocerá que nada hay comparable en el teatro francés, ni aun en el griego á la viveza de colorido y la expresión de la verdad con que se hallen retratados en nuestras comedias de figurón algunos de los diferentes caracteres ridículos y extravagantes de los hombres?"

P. 164. Menéndez y Pelayo in his Heterodoxos, v. III, on the XVIII Century, ch. iii, div. 5. El Enciclopedismo en las letras humanas—sees in Quintana's "Poética" a very dangerous liberal and humanitarian trend. "Quintana en su Ensayo

didáctico sobre las reglas del drama—no encuentra elogio bastante para el teatro de Voltaire—porque se propuso destruir la superstición en Mahoma y dar lecciones de humanidad en Elzira."

P. 164. To the discussions of El Censor, El Pensador, we could add the writings of Maruján, Molina, and Zavaleta, who preceded them and represent the school of García de la Huerta. Maruján to save the Comedia started the practice of condemning Cervantes. (Menéndez y Pelayo, Ideas, v. III, pp. 214-222.)

CONCLUSION.

The eighteenth century in Spain is a period of that country's history which its scholars find great difficulty in viewing sympathetically.

There is nothing astonishing in this. There are two good reasons why the eighteenth century should seem unattractive or rather repulsive to patriotic Spaniards. First, without mentioning the irreligious character of the period, and for many that matter forms a very powerful third reason, the eighteenth century was almost uninterruptedly barren from either the artistic or the intellectual point of view. Secondly, that barrenness became evident to the leading thinkers of the rest of Europe who, throughout the period, indulged in comparisons as flattering to their own countries as they were humiliating to the Spanish nation.

The neo-classic movement was at its origin a confession of inferiority on the part of a minority of public-spirited Spaniards. By the discussion it promoted it did much to make patent to the rest of Europe the intellectual stagnation of the peninsula. It is, therefore, perfectly natural that modern Spaniards should look upon it with disfavor. It seems to them to embody the spirit of a period when love of country was at a very low ebb.

The many expressions of superiority uttered by self-satisfied Frenchmen and Italians, particularly towards the end of the century, might by themselves warrant this attitude of hostility on the part of Spaniards. If now we reflect upon the fact that, after many years of pin pricks inflicted by disdainful neighbors, there came suddenly a time when foreign influence took the form of foreign invasion, or if we stop to think that to many Spaniards the neo-classic movement culminated in armed interference and the shedding of Spain's best blood, then we find it impossible to wonder at the hostility which we meet so consistently in the works of those scholars who have studied the eighteenth century.

To be sure, neo-classicism was not responsible for this tragic climax, but when national humiliation comes from the very quarters which had been promising intellectual greatness and renewed national prosperity it would be asking too much from the victims of a brutal onslaught to distinguish the current of useful thought from the tyranny which used it as a cloak.

Spaniards in our own days have adopted as their own the quarrel of their forefathers. Viewed from the standpoint of what Spain had to

bear first and last from those who claimed to possess light for all nations, this hostility is highly honorable. It is an assurance that, whatever may have been the state of discouragement of Spaniards during certain parts of the eighteenth century, patriotism in that nation is again very strong and uncompromising. To be sure, it seems to us that not infrequently its very strength warps the judgments of certain writers but who is not ready to overlook prejudice arising from the bitter grief which national disaster has caused to spring up in the hearts of patriotic men?

Unfortunately, hostility to neo-classicism does not always arise from causes as honorable as the ones which we have just been discussing.

We have seen that each new exponent of neo-classicism during the long drawn out period which we have surveyed, saw rising before him antagonists who attacked him passionately without having taken the trouble to study the real merits of the thought advocated.

Perhaps the most flagrant illustration of this is supplied by the case of the "Diario de los Literatos." The editors of that periodical started in all sincerity and praiseworthy moderation to tell what they felt was the truth and what actually was the truth. They fell before the blind rage of opponents whose strength came from their perfect ignorance of the case in hand. In the name of patriotism, they drowned out with their angry protests the perfectly sensible advice which was being given them by their more thoughtful compatriots. To the shout of "my country right or wrong" they violently repulsed a form of thought which, with all its superficial weaknesses, contained elements capable of reinstilling vigor into the nearly defunct intellectual life of the nation.

This chauvinism was the fountain head of that under-current of "romanticism" which, as Menéndez y Pelayo proudly points out, never for a moment ceased opposing neo-classicism. An under-current representing a protest of Spanish art against the foreign importation would have been eminently honorable. Such was not primarily the opposition which neo-classicism had to contend with. We do not mean to say that such an element did not enter into the opposing current, but it did so only subconsciously and, at first at least, to a very small degree. It gathered its real strength not from seeing Spain's art ignored but from an instinctive impulse and an impassioned desire to repulse a thing foreign. To a large extent, the opposition to the neo-classic movement was merely the result of an irrational refusal to face conditions as they were and to admit that the decadent present had but little in common with the glorious past.

Such an attitude is of course not an isolated instance. We may recall for the sake of illustration the quarrel between Castillejo and the

Italian school. Castillejo compared Boscán to Luther and we know what such a comparison implies in a country as faithful to the Catholic Church as was Spain in those days. Neither do we need to confine our illustrations to the history of Spanish literature. What a long war did not Goldoni have to wage against those who felt that in attacking the "commedia dell'arte" he was committing an unpatriotic act? In our own days when a French literary critic eulogizes under the all-covering epithet of "style plantureux" the least defensible excesses of some hopelessly neurotic and decadent author, he is often merely waving the red flag of the "esprit gaulois" to show his independence of Anglo-Saxon prejudice.

To return to our main topic, irreverent as it may sound at first, there is just a little of that narrow patriotism evident in the works of some of the best scholars who have devoted part of their energies to a study of the eighteenth century in Spain. They themselves are, unconsciously perhaps, continuing, in an attenuated form, the gallophobic traditions of the neo-classic opposition which throughout the eighteenth century, for better or for worse, never ceased to be active.

That spirit is not strong enough as a rule to bring out epithets of out and out condemnation. It makes itself felt, however, by creating an atmosphere of sympathy about every name connected with the neo-classic opposition and by casting the chill of its tacit disapproval over the memory of those who favored the foreign importation.

As a matter of fact, it is interesting to make a study of the kind of adjectives which naturally cluster about the names of the leaders of the two camps.

The most humble exponents of the opposition see flocking about their names the many vocables which in the rich Castilian tongue indicate qualities of brilliancy, dash, valor, boldness, haughty independence.

It is often as difficult for the humble intellects who opposed neo-classicism to bear this burden of glorious epithets as it is for the reader to observe with composure how all possible synonyms for frigidity and impotence gather automatically about the names of the best men produced by Spain during the eighteenth century.

To be specific, a writer who, like Forner, produced nothing of lasting value, is treated more sympathetically than his enemy Iriarte or his friend L. F. de Moratín.

It is only just to add that eminently fair-minded critics, men of the type of Menéndez y Pelayo for instance, hit on a happy compromise. When they discuss neo-classicism as a whole, they make their dislike of it quite evident, but when they deal with the stronger exponents of that

movement, as individuals, they generously point out the good qualities of their characters and of their literary productions.

This mild form of antagonism to foreign influences "per se" is very interesting. It often stamps a critic's style with a quaint, half-avowed aggressiveness which is not without charm. To be sure, there are times when it involves an author in slight self-contradictions but the reader can not help being pleased in recognizing a turn of mind which will undoubtedly exist as long as there are Spaniards in Spain.

In the course of this study we have become convinced that the neo-classic movement was not as unimportant as the slimness of the literary production derived directly from it would at first seem to indicate. We can not do better in closing than state briefly what seems to us to be Spain's indebtedness to neo-classicism.

First of all, we may well be forgiven for restating a point which is so frequently lost sight of, namely, that neo-classicism was primarily a reform movement started by Spaniards and exclusively by Spaniards. Not a single foreign name is associated with any one of the important stages in the development of what was primarily a rationalistic propaganda. The leaders of the movement were at all times men of superior capacity who saw clearly the need of a radical change in the intellectual policy of their nation. They perceived that Spanish thought had relied altogether too much in the past on unchecked intuition and they deliberately set themselves to bring about the necessary change.

Not only were these leaders Spanish born, they were in all cases intensely patriotic Spaniards.

Their opponents, for the most part, men of inferior intellectual worth, did not, as they supposed, hold the monopoly of patriotism in Spain. It is difficult to understand how it is that so much doubt has gathered about the quality of the neo-classic leaders' faithfulness to the fatherland when their works and often their whole lives abound in unmistakable proofs of their enthusiastic love of country.

As a matter of fact, intense love of country and deep concern for its fair name were the causes which brought the neo-classic movement into being.

Luzán wrote his "Poética" primarily to put his country on a par intellectually with the rest of Europe. The editors of the "Diario" started on their campaign because of the slight which contemporary Spanish literature had received from the Jesuits and from the "Académie des Sciences." Montiano undertook the great labor of drawing up an outline of the history of the drama in Spain with the sole purpose of refuting an impertinent and poorly informed Frenchman. If he undertook a second task

which must have proved even more irksome than the first, namely, the composing of two regular tragedies, it was only because he wished to refute his foreign opponent more completely still and because he was eager to give encouragement to his countrymen.

Some will say that to be ashamed of one's country before foreigners is a strange way to show one's patriotism. We shall feel free to reply to this that there is such a thing as blind patriotism which, besides being stupid, is harmful to the fatherland.

The neo-classicists were consistently enlightened patriots, patriots of the highest kind. Their opponents were patriots also, sincere indeed, but, for the most part, narrow-minded and in many cases quite poorly educated. Excellent as were their intentions, such men, because of their lack of application and the narrow range of their vision, would never have done anything of themselves to pull Spain out of the state of decadence into which it had fallen during the reign of Charles II.

To take up again the names of the most important leaders of the reform party, how can there be any doubt as to the faithfulness to Castilian ideals of a man such as the author of the "Fiesta de Toros en Madrid" or the creator of the Spanish fable literature? Who would for a moment suspect the patriotism of Cadalso who, if he did say bitter things regarding certain Spanish foibles, was more bitter still in his criticism of the weaknesses of French literature and who finally sealed his loyalty with his blood before the English trenches at Gibraltar?

Menéndez y Pelayo in his "Ideas Estéticas" has paid such an honorable tribute to the memory of the younger Moratín that he should never require further rehabilitation. As for Jovellanos, what country can boast of a patriotic figure blending more perfectly zeal for the welfare of the fatherland and keen insight into its needs?

The evident loyalty to national ideals of these reformers must not make us lose sight of the fact that there was perhaps not one of them who, at one time or another, did not pass an unnecessarily harsh judgment on some of the great authors of the Spanish golden age. It would be also unfair not to point out that their method of presenting their thought was didactic in the extreme, that it made for narrowness and emphasized clearness at the expense of poetic inspiration.

Such weaknesses made the contemporaries of neo-classicism lose sight of the true character of the movement.

As it happens so often in controversies, what was at first secondary in importance or merely incidental assumed in the heat of passion the importance which belonged to the real issues. Luzán and his literary descendants meant first of all to deal with the present and not with the

past. What had aroused those men was the literary production of their own day and generation. If they used the name of Lope or of Calderón it was merely for purposes of argumentation. What they criticized in these writers is what anybody in our day still finds worthy of criticism, and in all cases the sum total of blame was less than that of praise. At any rate they never went as far as some of their opponents who, for the sake of argument, were willing to deny genius to Cervantes and would have put Guillén de Castro among the third-raters of the dramatic field of the Golden Age.

With Luzán, with the earlier issues of the "Diario," with Cadalso and with the younger Moratín it requires an unusual understanding of the extreme sensitiveness of Castilian pride in literary matters to understand why it was that the judgments passed produced such outbursts of indignation.

It redounds to the glory of the neo-classicists to have seen that theirs was not a time for adulation. With the evidence of decadence patent on every hand they realized that it was high time for men of judgment and and of courage to stand and fearlessly point out just how the decadence had come about. If they showed undue severity towards men of real genius, who by the way were great enough not to suffer from such injustice, they also caused the scales of ignorance to fall from the eyes of many of their contemporaries. What injustice they committed was paid for a hundred-fold by the service they rendered to Spanish letters in showing to how low an artistic and rational level they had fallen.

That, in spite of the great names dragged into the controversy, the fight was really directed against the literature of the day has been recognized by Menéndez y Pelayo, who makes the following statement concerning the "Comedia Nueva": "Los dramaturgos á quienes en la Comedia Nueva se persigue y flagela no son, de ninguna suerte, los gloriosos dramaturgos del siglo XVII, ni siquiera sus últimos y débiles imitadores los Cañizares y Zamoras, ni tampoco los poetas populares como don Ramón de la Cruz, sino una turba de vándalos, un ejambre de escritores famélicos y proletarios, que ninguna escuela podía reclamar por suyos y que juntaban en torpe mezcolanza los vicios de todas: el desarreglo novelesco de los antiguos, el prosaísmo ramplón y casero del siglo XVIII, los absurdos del melodrama francés, las ternezas de la comedia lacrimatoria, sin que tampoco siguiesen rumbo fijo en cuanto á los llamados preceptos clásicos, puesto que unas veces los conculcaban y otras (que no eran las menos) hacían gala de observarlos, especialmente el de las unidades, con un estúpido servilísimo, que no hacía ni mejores ni peores sus desatinadas farsas. Tal era la escuela que Moratín no llegó

á enterrar, porque escribió muy poco para el teatro, y porque casi nadie le siguió: escuela que en una forma ú otra se prolongó hasta muy adentro del reinado de Fernando VII., y no se puede decir definitivamente enterrada con el mismo Comella, que murió en 1814. Tal era el teatro de los Moncines, Valladares, Conchas, Zavalas y Zamoras, y, sobre todo, de aquel infatigable dramaturgo de Vich, que inundó la patria escena de Marías Teresas, Catalinas, Federicos Segundos, Cecilias, Jacobas, negros sensibles y Czares de Moscovia, pudiendo saborear en vida algo que se parecía á la gloria, puesto que sus informes abortos ocuparon las tablas de los teatros de Italia y quizá de otras naciones de Europa, como el mismo Moratín testifica. Todos estos infelices poetastros eran mucho menos españoles que Moratín, como no quiera entenderse por español el ser bárbaro, ignorante y desatinado." [230]

What was true at the time of the "Comedia Nueva" had been true pretty nearly throughout the century. Let us say it again, the neo-classic movement was not a theoretical discussion on the merits of Spanish literature in the past. It was a determined attack on the evils which, at the time, sapped the intellectual life of Spain.

The fact remains, however, that, in the literary field, the neo-classic movement was anything but an unqualified success. When one has pointed out the good intentions of the party and indicated the evils which it aimed to check or crush, one has done about all that can be done in its favor.

The successes of Iriarte and of the younger Moratín, great as they were, did not fulfill the promises made by the reforming party since its beginnings in 1737. Some good poems and a few first-class comedies could not satisfy an expectation kept alive by a hundred years or so of propaganda announcing a literary revival.

In the light of these slim results, the fuss and the display of logic made by the reforming party and its too frequent appeal to the government for help against its enemies make it appear a trifle ridiculous. The modern reader can not help but be strongly reminded by all this of the fable of the mountain that gave birth to a mouse.

It is a far cry from this to accusing the neo-classic movement of being the cause of the sterility of the Spanish mind during the eighteenth century. Cotarelo y Mori opens the first chapter of his book on "La Tirana" as follows: "Una de las causas, y no de las menos eficaces, de que durante la mayor parte del siglo pasado no se hubiesen compuesto buenos dramas y comedias fué la cruzada, la guerra sin cuartel que el elemento más ilustrado de nuestros compatriotas, ciego por el deseo de novedades

[230] Ideas Estéticas, v. VI, pp. 133-134. 2d ed. Madrid, 1904.

y el espíritu irreflexivo de imitación extranjera, hizo al gran teatro nacional del siglo XVII."

Nothing can be more unfair than a statement of this type. During the whole of the eighteenth century Spain suffered from the reaction which naturally followed its immense artistic output of the preceding period. As Quintana pointed out, the eighteenth century was infinitely less poetic than its predecessor. It is futile to attempt to make a few men responsible for a state of depression which afflicted the whole nation. Moreover it might be claimed with a fair degree of reason that neo-classicism, which created nothing, at least carefully husbanded what talent there was. Thanks to its discipline the few gifted writers which the nation possessed in those sterile days were kept from wasting the little flame of their genius in an inefficient and quickly extinguished blaze.

To close the topic of the relation of neo-classicism to Spanish literature, we may point out two more matters of importance. The first is that, as the movement contained certain aristocratic elements, it tended to take away from the common people the absolute sway which they had held for a long time over the dramatic field. The lovers of popular literature will not consider this change otherwise than in the light of a calamity. All we can say is that from the information which we have gained by the reading which this essay has necessitated we believe sincerely that it was a good thing for Spanish letters to have the fate of plays pass from the jurisdiction of the "Polacos" and the "Chorizos" to that of the more intellectual middle class.

The second point, at which we shall merely hint, is that neo-classicism drove out of the field of literature a mass of amorphous material which had remained in it through the agency of the degenerated autos and "comedias." We refer to the vast amount of indigestible lore of medieval origin which, after having been driven out of polite letters by Cervantes, had taken refuge in the decadent drama. In this connection, neo-classicism may well be considered a last and much belated stage of the renaissance.

But so far we have been dealing only with the negative results of the reform. A controversy carried on with vigor and sincerity by two parties can not fail to be productive of certain positive results. It is along lines other than those of creative literature that the positive services of the neo-classic quarrel become apparent.

Prominent among these positive results is the renewal of interest on the part of Spaniards in the literary history of their country. To gather arguments with which to strengthen their cause and to show to foreign critics how poorly founded their opinions were, the neo-classicists ran-

sacked the dramatic and poetical archives of the nation. With the very same purposes in mind their antagonists studied the field of Spanish letters with a zeal proportionate to the keenness of the controversy.

We saw that Luzán had preceded his technical discussion of poets by outlining the development of Spanish poetry. Soon after, Montiano gathered all of his knowledge of the drama in Spain into an incomplete yet useful compendium of the history of the genre. Velázquez, with equally good intentions but less good fortune, outlined the history of Castilian lyric poetry.

These various attempts were not scholarly if we compare them with the results of modern scholarship. They were very praiseworthy nevertheless since their authors were pioneers in their respective fields. They rendered accessible to all Spaniards what heretofore was to be obtained only from such rather inaccessible sources as the Latin works of Nicolas Antonio. Furthermore, these works came at the time when they were most needed. Montiano's "Discursos" and Velázquez's study on lyric poetry became known abroad just at the moment when the curiosity of foreigners concerning Spanish topics was beginning to awaken. The translations of these works which came into the hands of Lessing and of Dietze may well be credited with having started among Germans the tradition of research in the Spanish field which we now associate with the names of Wolf, Schack and so many other noted scholars.

At home, the labors of these Spanish pioneers proved also very fruitful. This is shown by the long list of works on literary history, of anthologies, of collections of "comedias" which, with or without prologues, fill the literary annals of Spain during the second half of the century. Some, like the "Parnasso Español" of Sedano, the "Cajón de Sastre" of Nipho or the "Theatro Hespañol" of García de la Huerta contained glaring defects, but they all led to Moratín's scholarly and elegant "Orígines del Teatro Español" and form a part of the long tradition which was to culminate in the publication of the "Biblioteca de Autores Españoles."

In the field of historical research, then, it is impossible to deny a place of great importance to the neo-classic movement. Through the intellectual activity which it stimulated in one way or in another, it brought about an awakening of interest in precise scholarship which resulted in the shedding of much light on the past glories of Spanish literature. Thanks to the neo-classic movement, the Spaniards were at last able to see with precision the real value of their art, and foreigners, after a century of disdainful indifference, began to realize the true greatness of their neighbor.

In another way still neo-classicism was productive of great results. In Spain as in France, neo-classicism, being an application of the rationalistic method, tended to prepare the way for what is termed "l'esprit philosophique." As a matter of fact, we have already pointed out that neo-classic criticism was eagerly adopted by certain Spaniards mainly because it happened to be an unobjectionable form of the thought which directed the activities of the encyclopedists and the physiocrats. A man of the stamp of Clavijo y Fajardo harped on the unities and on decorum mainly because it was a harmless way of playing with the goddess Reason.

In studying the journalistic literature of the last third of the century, one becomes aware of a most interesting evolution.* At first writers theorize "ad nauseam" on imitation, decorum and the sacro-sanct topic of the unities. Gradually they pass from such abstract topics to discussing rather gingerly possible modifications in the administration of Church and State. Finally, reason having won enough of a constituency to ensure the personal safety of the writers, we come upon violent, then upon vituperative attacks against the friars, against the principles of government then in vogue and against the theory of property.

These attacks are fairly reeking with the destructive spirit of Voltaire and the lachrymose individualism of Rousseau. In fact, we cannot escape the conclusion that Voltaire and Rousseau found their way into Spain mainly because the cult of Reason applied to literary criticism had paved the way for them.

Whether the result was as good or bad as contemporary factions believed, is still a matter of uncertainty. No one, however, will deny that the spirit of free discussion which was thus promoted was infinitely better for the intellectual and economic development of Spain than the state of intellectual stagnation which reigned all but supreme in the earlier years of the century. Little did the first exponents of neo-classicism realize the ultimate results of their efforts when to bad taste in literature they opposed the dogma of Aristotle.

To summarize our conclusions: neo-classicism with all its petty features and comparative sterility marked a period of retrospection and introspection which proved deeply beneficial to Spanish thought even though its good effects were subsequently diminished by national calamities.

When the air had cleared, after this long and stubborn controversy, Spaniards discovered that they had attained to a degree of intellectual maturity unequaled since the Golden Age and that there was in the national thought a European orientation which at last enabled them to join in the great movements of modern civilization.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION.

P. 182. El Censor. Obra Periódica. Madrid, 1781. In the preface the "Censor" discusses his own character and temperament. He is quick tempered, always on the "qui vive" for novelties and a firm believer in the almighty power of Reason. V. I, p. 19: "En la más tierna edad me ofendía todo, todo me daba en rostro; tenía ya el atrevimiento de oponerme á los hombres hechos y las canas más respetables no eran poderosas para contenerme.

"Apenas sabía leer corrientemente, cuando haviéndome caído en las manos la Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Francia, que escribió Enrico Dávila, me acuerdo que me costó muy buenas bofetadas al sostener contra el dictamen de un tío muy rico, y á quien por tanto era preciso creer, que el Duque de Guisa y el Cardenal de Lorena habían sido unos grandes pícaros . . . y más que las bofetadas sentía yo la injusticia que en mi dictamen hacía mi tío á aquellos señores que no eran de la Liga. . . ."

Then again, p. 20: "era el escándalo de mis condiscípulos el atrevimiento con que me oían decir que una cosa que había dicho Aristóteles era un disparate. Yo mismo me formaba mis opiniones, yo solo era todo mi partido. En fin andando el tiempo llegó la cosa á tal punto que vine á ser un mártir de mi razón. Semejante á una vista delicada que ofende qualquiera exceso de luz, todo lo que se aparta un poco de la razón me lastima, el más pequeño extravío de la regla y del orden me causa un tedio mortal. . . . No puedo asistir á una comedia sin riesgo de que se me forme una apostema por lo que callo. . . . Ninguna autoridad humana, ni la costumbre más antigua, ni la moda más general, es capaz de persuadirme lo que mi razón repugna . . . en todas partes hallo cosas que me lastiman. En las tertulias, en los paseos, en los teatros, *hasta en los templos mismos* hallo en que tropezar."

The influence of Rousseau is noticeable in v. I, Disc. III, p. 56: "Historia trágica de un jornalero y reflexiones sobre la suerte de estos infelices." Also Discursos IX and X on the "Idle Rich" and on "Idleness." P. 133: What right does Calixto have to hold so much property? "¿No los ha adquirido en algún tiempo por su trabajo, por su industria, por su mérito . . . ? Pues Calixto que en este caso sería solamente inútil ahora me temo mucho que no sea injusto poseedor de esos fondos. Todas las cosas que la naturaleza ha criado fuera de nosotros, las ha hecho comunes á todos los hombres."

In the next article (X) care is taken to explain that one rendering unusual service to the community may hold more property than the average person, p. 157: "Sería menester en fin ser tan impío como Baile para creer que la perfección christiana es opuesta al florecimiento de una República."

Disc. XX. To prove that all the misfortunes of Spain come from the fact that the peasants do not own their land. This was preceded by two letters in Gallicized Spanish (Disc. XIV) intended, of course, to poke fun at those who did not preserve the purity of their mother tongue. Disc. XVII is a description of a "parfait honnête homme."

From these extracts it may be seen that the "Censor" expresses opinions either advanced or foreign on all kinds of subjects from literary criticism to political economy.

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